

REFERENCE



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ERIE FIFTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO.

State Street.

BY OUR "ERIE COUNTY" CONTRIBUTOR.

In 1821, State street, from the Bay to 26th street, had been laid out to the width of 100 feet for 26 years, and from the bank of the lake to 12th street, had been opened to its legal width, but at that date was very blank as to buildings. From the water to Second street the bluff bank stood in its natural state until 1824, when the first attempt was made to cut the hill down to grade, but it was not passable for two or three years thereafter. On the east side of State street, from Front to Second street, it was owned by P. S. V. Hamot, Esq., half way through to French street, and he lived in a story and a half frame house near the corner of State and 2d, fronting on 2d. Mr. Hamot lived there until 1826, when he built the brick mansion on Front street, and made that his residence until his death in 1846. The site of the old house is now occupied by the "Franklin buildings."

From Front to 2d street, west side, Gen. Kelso's old residence and garden, yard, &c., occupied the entire space.

South of 2d, east side, Capt. Daniel Dobbins owned the entire front to 3d street, and the "Dobbins homestead," built in 1816, stood at the corner of State and 3d streets. No other house was on that blank until 1823, when a small frame building was put up by Capt. Dobbins, which is still standing. Capt. Dobbins opened his house as a hotel in 1822, which he kept some time and then discontinued it. It was in that house that Gen. Lafayette and party were introduced to the Burgess and citizens, June 3d, 1825, on his tour through here.

From 2d to 3d streets, west side, Gen. Benjamin Wallace had a row of wooden buildings occupied by him as a dwelling, blacksmith shop, and nail factory, when nails were made and sold at 25 cents per pound.

On the east side, from 3d to 5th streets, the only building then there was a barn where the Wright block now stands, which was owned by Judah Colt, Esq., and an orchard from the barn to 3d street. With the exception of the barn, not a building stood on either side from Capt. Dobbins's residence to the Park.

The old Court House, which stood west of State street in the Park, was burnt down in March, 1823, and rebuilt the same year. State street across the Park was broken by a ravine, and the roadway was very narrow.

South of the Park, west side, stood Brown's Hotel, the stone tavern built in 1811, and kept by Robert Brown until 1829. Brown's Hotel, with the barn and garden, extended to 7th street, and they were the only buildings there until 1829 when Thos. Moorhead, jr., built a store building at the corner of State and 7th streets, and opened a general store there. This was the first store started on State street.

From 7th to 8th streets, west side, Thos. Hughes owned the north half front and Thos. Laird the south half, but there were no buildings on State street. Mr. Hughes had a two story brick house on 7th street,

but west of State street. The first building put up on that front was a blacksmith shop built by Thos. Dillon in 1825 on the Hughes lot, and it was operated by him for many years.

There were no buildings on the east side from the Park to 7th street. John Mapes built a small frame house and a blacksmith shop where the "Perry Block" now stands, then owned by Christian Ebersole of Millcreek. James Liddell started a blacksmith shop on the next lot south in 1827. Mr. Mapes worked on the Ebersole lot three years, and was succeeded by S. & D. Burton.

South of 8th street, west side, Thomas Laird was owner to 9th street, and had a tavern on the corner of 8th and State streets, which he kept from 1811 to 1833, and died there that year. Mr. Laird was Sheriff of the county from 1819 to 1822, and was County Treasurer several years. His tavern, barn, and sheds adjoining were the only buildings in that square except a two-story frame house built by him in 1819, at the corner of 9th and State streets. An orchard with fruit of all kinds in abundance occupied the rest of the premises.

The east side from 8th to 9th had no buildings to speak of, until David Burton built a two-story brick house where the Noble Block now stands, about 1830. Samuel Hays, Esq., owned the south half of the front, and moved part of his old house there in 1827. Mr. Hays had his home south of 9th street, and erected a tannery there in 1806. His first row of frame buildings were replaced by fine brick structures, where he resided until his death in 1850. The property is still owned by his sons, who inherit the energetic business habits of their worthy father. Mr. Hays owned half way from 9th to 10th streets, and the new Hays block on those old grounds, speaks creditably for the owners. South of Mr. Hays to 10th was owned by Jonah Cowgill, who lived in a small house on 10th street where he resided until his death in 1826. It afterward passed into the hands of Henry Cadwell, Esq., and since his death has been broken up, and now has some of the best stores in Erie on that front.

South of 9th street, west side, where the Cottage House now stands, was an old wooden building long used as a cabinet maker's shop, first by a Mr. Cook, then by George Schantz, James Gray, and William McNutt. This property passed into the hands of William Kelley, Esq., who erected the cottage house for a residence.

No buildings were erected on State street south of 10th until after 1825, when Alvah Flynt erected the large two-story frame house standing at the north east corner of State and 11th streets, which was his residence until his death. A small log house stood where Black & Germer's foundry now stands, which was the only habitation on State street south of 10th in 1825.

It is hard to realize that State street was merely a country road, with two taverns on it, but not a store or shop, while gardens, orchards, and potato patches covered the lots on both sides of the street.

The local and commercial trade of Erie now engaged in the fish business, and the large amount of capital invested in it, is a suffi-

cient excuse for calling attention to the early fishing days of Erie. When the first white people landed at Presque Isle they found fifteen or twenty Indian wigwams in the valley at the mouth of Millcreek, whose inhabitants subsisted chiefly on fish got in the bay and lake, and the first surveyors in their camp there were furnished with fish bought of those Indians. After Capt. Bissell came with his company and camped to clear Garrison Hill and build a fort there, their supplies were brought on the lake, and were of a very inferior quality, that had been furnished for "Wayne's army" in the west, and the men soon resorted to catching fish as the Indians did. One of the company, if he was not at least partly native, had been among them so much that he was at least Indian in habits and inclination, and Capt. Bissell found it more profitable to let him fish for their supply than try and keep him at the axe, which he would not swing if he could help it. "Jim" at first borrowed one of the Indian canoes and got one of the Indians to go with him, who initiated him in the charm of catching fish and the different bars on which they were most likely to meet with success. Then he must have a canoe of his own made, as (he insisted) the fish would not bite after a boat built by white men. A tree was cut down, dug out Indian fashion, and finished for him, and he soon kept a supply of fresh fish constantly on hand, and as settlers came in he would have fresh fish to sell them, or sell his rations of salt pork if they preferred that. For a few years the early families got their fish and pork in that way.

The first settlers near Erie and along the lake shore each made that a supply in part, and would have their log canoes drawn up in the mouth of a creek ready to fish when they needed, and with the faithful rifle watch the deer lick, and procure a good supply of venison. The best deer lick near the bay was very near where the new Keystone shoe factory now stands, on 12th street, east of East street, and many were the poor bucks that were brought down there by the unerring rifle in the hands of the frontiersman. The Pennsylvanians as they located here were great for fishing, and would have their canoe, fishing tackle, &c. in their cabins from year to year, as they were able to provide it—as the Riblets, Ebersoles, John Cosper, sr. (who was quite an adept), and others. Of the early fishermen who made a business of catching fish to sell "old Mr. Kinney" was about the first, and though very poor, had his fisherman's hut sometimes in one place, sometimes in another, and sold fish. His last location was above the Head on the farm now owned by J. C. Marshall, Esq., on the banks of the lake, where he came to an untimely end by becoming choked with a fish bone, causing his death! Uncle Ben Fleming, of Perry, a battle fame, married a daughter of Kinney, and after peace was established and the Navy could get along without him, went fishing, and many families were early and late supplied from his hooks for years.

In 1830, Thomas Horton, who had lived in Erie some ten years at that time, projected the idea of fishing with seines at the place, and procured two boats, lines, c

lage, seine, &c., at a cost of nearly \$20 and commenced the fish business. In the spring of 1831, he got it fairly under way and kept up many years, and had a competitor in the person of David Fowzler, on a smaller scale. Poor Horton, after following it season after season, and known to everyone, was drowned in January, 1841, breaking through the ice in coming over the Bay from the Peninsula with others from a hunting party, and he was greatly missed by his patrons. White fish were early caught in the Fall of the year, cured and packed in barrels, and the citizens all along the lake had an abundant supply of salt white fish, that were caught in Detroit river, and the idea then prevailed they could not be got anywhere else. A fresh white fish to any of the early residents of Erie was almost unknown. Many from Erie went every Fall up to Detroit river and made a business of fishing and packing for the markets. John Sweeney and others followed it several years. Fishing with seines ever since Horton's day has been kept up at Erie. The town and country have had an abundant supply, and the regular fish trade here has for twenty years been getting larger and larger, and brought a great deal of money here.

The discovery that white fish could be found and caught in Lake Erie about twenty years since has opened a great trade of wholesale and retail peddling and packing fish caught here, and if any one would see the tons of fish frequently brought ashore, and the different establishments for curing, and the various processes gone through with, they would say it was a very extensive trade at present. Formerly black bass were the best and principal fish caught, and also pike, pickerel, &c. The seines added many others to the list, and gill nets have added still more. White fish were for many years got only from Detroit, Mackinaw, and Lake Huron, but the fish market of Erie now has plenty for town and country, and they are sent by railroad far into the interior of the State, and large amounts are cured and barreled here every year, but if any one still prefers the black bass to any others, let him get an Indian canoe and try it. When the piers were made from the shore out to the channel in 1825, it made a good fishing place with poles and lines for many of the citizens, both town and country, but it is small business now compared to the loads that are brought in from the nets.

The Government Lake Survey—Reminiscences of Engineers Formerly Employed on the Lakes.

To the Editor of the Gazette:

Sir—A few weeks since you gave us some account of the work of the Lake Survey going on in our vicinity. Government men have been operating during the past season upon the great lakes from Superior to Ontario. The chief object of this survey is to give us correctly the shore line of the Northern lakes. The traveler will notice several towers of observation, somewhat resembling oil derricks, at different points along the lake

shore. One of these is built upon Mr. Nicholson's farm, in this county; others are erected in the towns of Ripley and Sheridan, in the adjoining county of Chautauqua. Between these towers the distance is accurately chained, and the record of the line becomes the base for triangulation. Soundings are taken in the lake, and a careful topography of the shore line made, extending back a mile into the country, and duly recorded. Very accurate surveys of cities, with their canals, harbors, and water ways, are made, and this will be the map of authority, and consulted by Government in all questions pertaining to the cities of the lakes. A higher civilization always follows in the wake of the Government surveyor and engineer.

The first of these men who visited the shores of Lake Erie came from France more than one hundred and twenty years ago, and was known as Mons. Mercie, an engineer, who stopped the building of a fort at Chadakoin, thirty miles east of Erie, overruling Babeer, and erected Fort Presque-Isle instead; and then commenced the military road southward.

The preference of Mons. Mercie for our harbor has been confirmed by all of his profession who have been sent in this direction by authority.

Washington, the surveyor, visited our county, as is well known, in 1753, but did not come as far as the lake.

In 1787, Andrew Ellicot, with Clinton, of New York, ran the northern line and boundary of the State, striking Lake Erie five miles east of the Ohio line.

In determining the bounds of "the triangle" with accuracy, it was found convenient to take for a starting point a mark at the west end of Lake Ontario, in His Majesty's dominions, and Andrew Ellicot, Surveyor General of the U. S., makes report to President Washington of such survey, under date Jan. 15, 1790. He arrived at Niagara, garrison 21, Oct., 1789, with Joseph Ellicot, of Baltimore, and Gen. Israel Chapin, of Mass., and they presented themselves to Lieut. Col. Harriss, the commandant. They were forbidden permission to remain, and "the commandant desired that our departure might be attended with expedition." They went to "the Jennesee River," where they received the permit (at length) from Lord Dorchester, Governor of Canada, to execute their mission in British territory, Capt. Guion having brought said permit from Quebec.

Andrew Ellicot wrote from Presque Isle, Oct. 11, 1790, "I yesterday completed the survey of the territory annexed to the State of Pennsylvania, after much difficulty and hardship. The land contained in this survey is generally good, and from its peculiar situation an important object to the State." Frederick Saxton went with Ellicot in behalf of Phelps & Gorham, who had purchased the Massachusetts preemption claim to Western New York.

It was while making the traverse of the Canadian side of the Niagara river in 1790, that Andrew, Joseph, and Benjamin Ellicot first saw the Falls of Niagara, and that Joseph and Benjamin, as the assistants of Andrew, made the first actual measurement

of the entire length of Niagara river, the respective falls of the river from Erie to Ontario, the height of the great falls, and the descent of the rapids. Andrew Ellicot in making his report of the survey of the boundary line, makes mention of these

measurements of the river, which have ever since been the acknowledged authority in all books giving an account of Niagara Falls.

It may be worthy of local mention that a grandson of Ellicot, and a grandson of one of the gallant Commanders under Commodore Perry, came to Erie and found for themselves wives in the same family, and the descendants of these men are worthy of their noble origin.

Gen. Bernard and Major Totten made a survey of our harbor about 1823.

Coming down to our own time, let us mention briefly some points in the life of a Government engineer well remembered by some of our old citizens. You will see a record of his enduring work while here in the map of the city and harbor of Erie accompanying Miss Sanford's admirable History of Erie County. We allude to Major T. S. Brown, the son of Maj. Sam Brown, U. S. A., and nephew of Maj. Gen. Jacob Brown, of 1812. He graduated at West Point in 1825 with the late Dallas Bache, was Professor of Mathematics for a brief period at West Point, and then served as Aid with John A. Dix upon Gen. Brown's staff. He served with Gen. Totten at Fort Adams, Newport, and afterwards for years had charge of the fortifications at Charleston, S. C.

He was then placed in charge of the harbors on Lake Erie, residing in our city for about two years. A public dinner was tendered to him by our citizens on his departure, but courteously declined.

Maj. Brown having resigned his position in the army, was succeeded by Capt. W. G. Williams. He then engaged in service upon the N. Y. & E. RR., and afterwards accepted the position of Consulting Engineer of the Emperor of Russia, as the successor of Maj. Whistler, who had died in St. Petersburg. Here he remained for five years and built the railroad from St. Petersburg to Moscow.

But his health failed, and declining a re-appointment he started for home, moving by easy stages, and battling for life, until reaching Naples, overcome with disease, he died in that city.

We mention at this time but one other engineer, and his name will awaken pleasant thoughts and happy memories among our people. We mean Capt. Simpson, of the U. S. Army. There seemed a peculiar fitness in his coming to reside in Erie, marrying as he did the daughter of one who sailed from our Bay as the commander of a gun boat under the immortal Perry. Lieut. Simpson always took an unusual interest, for a temporary resident, in all that pertained to the good of our town. Gideon J. Ball, William A. Galbraith, Thomas M. Austin, O. D. Spafford and others, members of the Wayne Grays, will remember the severe drillings the company received in the Academy yard, and upon the green in front of Mr. Hamot's residence, at the hands of Capt. Simpson while perfecting them in the admirable discipline which showed so well at the Meadville encamp-

ment, and won for the Grays the prize banner in a contest with the crack companies of such cities as Pittsburg and Buffalo. We heard of that banner the other day through the columns of the GAZETTE. Keep your flag, "Old Boys," until you find a company that will match the Grays. "I never saw better marching than the Grays showed at Meadville," said Gen. Bidwell to the writer in '61, "and say to Col. McLane that were I not engaged in recruiting a regiment for service, nothing would please me better than to take command under him."

JOHN ASHBROUGH.

From, James
Erie Pa.
Date, Dec. 5/92

AN ANCIENT LANDMARK

At Turnpike And Peach Streets Razed—a Relic of Early Days

Constable Bros. on Saturday leveled to the ground the old building at the corner of Peach and Turnpike streets to make room for Swift & Co.'s new packing house and wholesale meat market. The building torn down was one of the few which stood in that section in ante-railroad days. It had been a mute witness to the exciting events of the railroad or "peanut war." At its sideboard many railroad men of bygone days had replenished the inner man, and one of the last incidents in its history was the murder of the popular restaurateur, Wm. Jones, whose assassin is serving his sentence in Riverside Penitentiary.

The house was built in 1842 for Mr. Frank Schaaf by the father of Mr. Chris. Rilling, of this city. C. Fidler did the cellar work and John Adams Daub and Lawrence Loesch furnished the stone. All these have passed away. The building, after Mr. Schaaf's death, was used as a hostelry by Jacob Eddinger, Fred Seelinger, Simon Christop and others, up till the eighties. The last occupants were E. Waldo and "Si" Alden. The house was known for many years as the St. Cloud Hotel and later as the Waldo House.

From, Sunday Graphic
Erie Pa.
Date, Oct. 1, 1893.



MAJ. WM. W. TYSON.

VETERANS' HOME, ERIE.

On the bluff overlooking the bay and peninsula of Presque Isle, the State of Pennsylvania has established a home for the disabled veterans of the war, and are keeping house on a large scale.

The view of the lake, the sweep of the wooded arm of land enclosing the bay, and the historic ground on which the buildings stand, impress the mind with the idea, that the commonwealth could not have found a more suitable place in which to house the old boys in blue.

The sentinels of France, England and America have in turn tramped back and forth on their beat, watching the advance of enemies, on every foot of the Soldiers' Home grounds.

How appropriate it seems that the state should find a place for her defenders to halt and rest awhile in, before the last onset, on the most historic ground in her borders.

The story of how the first buildings came to be put up for a marine hospital, is a household word, but it remained for the Grand Army to originate the plan of utilizing it.



SOLDIERS' HOME, ERIE. FRONT OF MAIN BUILDING.



DINING ROOM.

It was first opened for a soldiers' home on February 22d, 1886.

Many an old veteran has found a haven under its roof in the last seven years.

It is an institution whose good name is a source of pleasure to every citizen of Pennsylvania, and they are justly proud of it. It is visited daily by great numbers of people, who are shown through every department by attentive guides, who are instructed by the management to make as clear as possible everything connected with the experiment of a state trying to practice housekeeping.

It is admitted on all hands that they have been very successful in the venture; nearly all of the board of trustees are veterans themselves, and the whole object of the board and the officers in charge of the home, is to keep it clean, within and without, financially and in every other direction.

The present Board of Control are:

Gov. Robert E. Pattison, President, Harrisburg.

Col. Robert B. Beath, Vice-President, Philadelphia.

Thomas J. Stewart, Secretary, Norristown.

Gen. Louis Wagner, Treasurer, Philadelphia.

Aud. Gen., D. McM. Gregg, Harrisburg.

State Treas. John W. Morrison, Harrisburg.

Hon. J. P. S. Gobin, Lebanon.

Hon. J. W. Nesbit, Oakdale Station.

Hon. Marshall J. Lull, Bernice.

Isaac B. Brown, Harrisburg.

Col. John P. Nicholson, Philadelphia.

All supplies are bought by contract, only the best quality being purchased, and the award of bids is made by the committee on supplies. The bills are audited by the auditing committee and the Auditors General. D. McM. Gregg is one of the board of trustees.

The food furnished is substantial and well and cleanly cooked. That it is sufficient for any one the following bill of fare, which was on the tables on September 16th, 1893, is here given:

PENNSYLVANIA SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' HOME—BILL OF FARE.

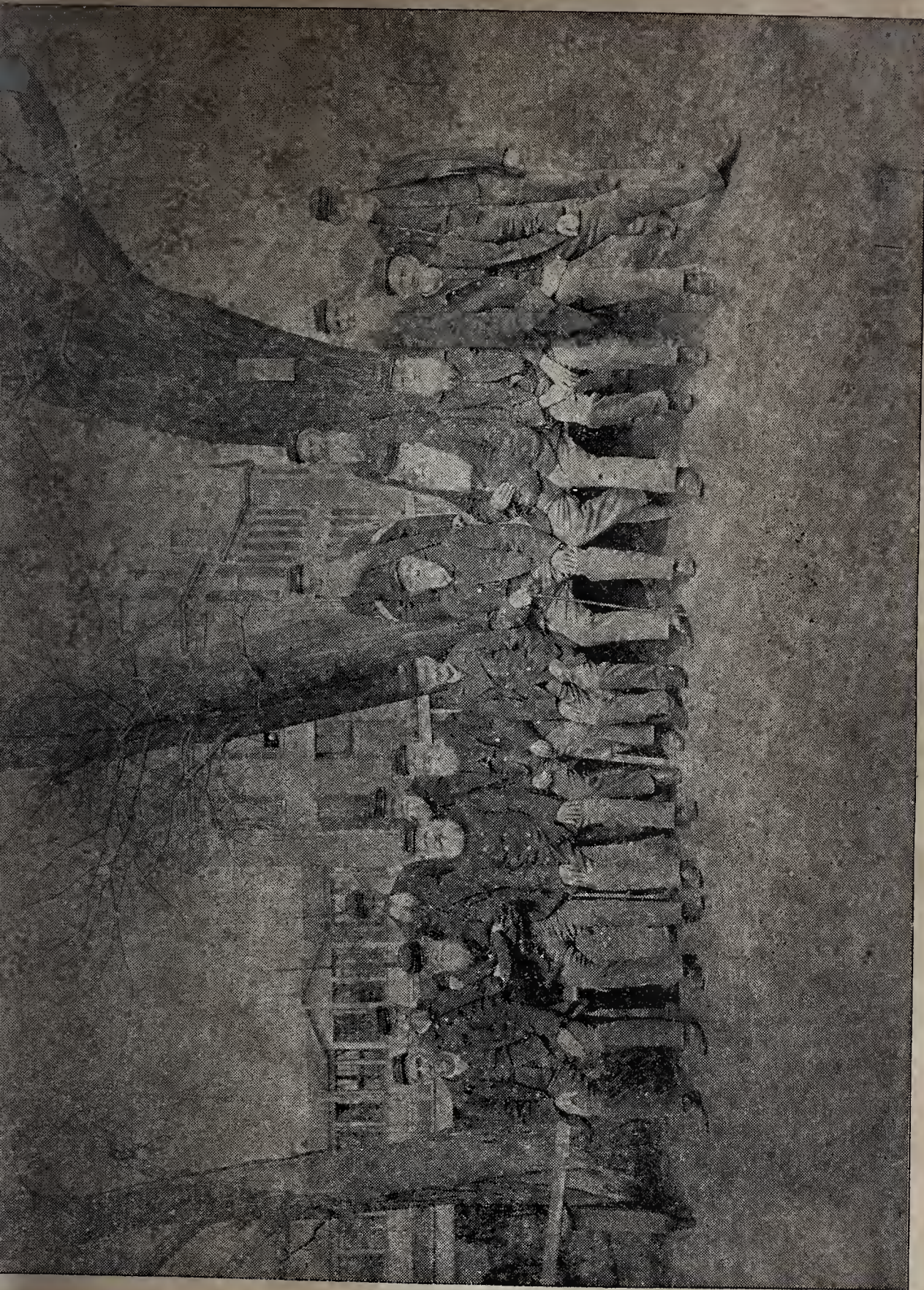
Breakfast—Oat mush, milk; fried potatoes, bread, butter, coffee.

Dinner—Boiled beef; bean soup, crackers; boiled potatoes; bread, butter, coffee.

Supper—Boiled eggs, cream potatoes, cheese, bread, butter, tea.

Every bed in the house is an eighteen pound hair mattress, and is on an iron frame woven wire spring bed. Clean linen is furnished to each man every week or oftener if needed, a white counterpane is on each of the beds, the washing and ironing is done in the building.

A shoe shop, a clothes cleaning establishment, a tailor shop, an upholstering shop, a barber shop, a paint shop, a car-



UNDER THE PENSION TREE.



GOVERNOR'S AND QUARTERMASTER'S RESIDENCE.

penner shop, are a part of the accompaniments of this immense house-keeping plant.

The kitchen is a model of neatness and quiet between meals, but is a scene of bustle and activity when the cooking is in process and they are preparing dinner for 350 men. The copper steaming kettles are all in an eruptive condition, with beef, soup, potatoes and coffee; bread is being cut (it takes 700 slices), butter is being made into pats and taken from the ice box, the coffee is being drained off, and the twenty-five or more waiters and cooks are going about, apparently in the most inextricable confusion. But this seeming chaos ends suddenly, and when the gong sounds the members come leisurely in and take their places, and eat until they are satisfied.

There are 357 members today, and the number is increasing.

All physical wants of the members are supplied, but no one for a moment supposes that human happiness or contentment can be issued from portals like their daily rations of food. So it often happens that some one of the members gets tired of the home and its surroundings and goes away. But it is not the fault of the management if they are not contented.

The marches and hardships of the war, and the added weight of years, is telling on some of the veterans, and not all of

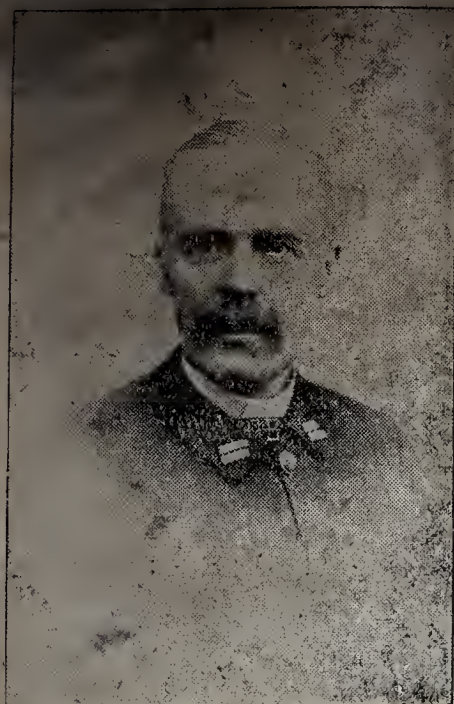
them are in the full possession of their faculties. Some of them have lost their memory, and as the years come fast it will not be long till the whole building will be a hospital.

The rooms are arranged to hold one, two, three, four, six and eight beds, and the commander endeavors to group the members so as to make it as pleasant as possible to each one under the roof of the home.

The majority of the inmates of the Erie Soldier's Home are men who, after the war, tried to make the world go around, but the disabilities of service and old age came on them and rendered them unable to compete with the vigorous men who have come on the scene of life's action since the war.

They are grateful for its protecting shelter, and we believe, from information given by the officers of the home, that no body of men in any walk of life, of the same number, conduct themselves with more decorum than the 357 members now in that institution.

Major William W. Tyson, the commander of the home, has been in charge since it was opened in 1886, and it is in a great measure owing to his untiring efforts for the comfort of the veterans, and his faithfulness to his duties, that the home is such a success as it is today. He enlisted as a private in Company A, 45 Pennsylvania volunteers, in 1861, and his war record was from that on a



CAPT. NOAH W. LOWELL.

brilliant one. He was soon made a captain, and was on the staff of several of the generals of the Ninth Army Corps, and since the war has held official positions under the state and local authorities at Allegheny, where he then lived.

Certainly no better qualified person could have been selected in the position of commander of the home.

Captain Noah W. Lowell, the present Quartermaster of the home was appointed in 1888. He enlisted as private in the 111th Pennsylvania volunteers in Company F, and served during the war and re-enlisted and was made Quartermaster of his regiment. He has, since the war, been agent for an express company at the depot in Erie, Pa., until his appointment at the home, since which time he has given the same thorough devotedness to duty that so long characterized him as an efficient and reliable officer of the express company, and has shown that the years that have passed since the war have in no way weakened his fondness for the boys who wore the blue, and which his anxiety for their comfort proves.

Dr. S. F. Chapin is surgeon of the home. He was during the war the surgeon of the 139th Pennsylvania volunteers. He has been a physician for more than thirty years, and his extensive army practice makes him well qualified for the position.

The engineer of the home is Mr. W. W. Thomas, who was also a soldier.

The varied interests of the Home are well taken care of both by the Board of Trustees and the officers in charge here.

The old veterans gathered have all the comforts of a well-kept home, and can feel that in their declining years their interests will be looked after and if they

are sick they will be tenderly nursed, if possible to health, but if the inevitable end does come, they will receive an honorable soldier's burial, and in the little cemetery, surrounded by their comrades, the "taps" will be sounded for them, while the waves of Lake Erie will sing on the shore for them a dirge as it beats the bluffs beneath them.

From, *Messenger*
Erie Pa.

Date, *Feb. 18th 1894.*

AN IMPORTANT EVENT.

The Visit of Ex-President
VanBuren to Erie.

IT WAS A GREAT DAY.

An Interesting Interview With Hon.
James Sill.

EARLY DAYS OF ERIE RECALLED.

The Address of Welcome and the Response--Sketch of the Borough of Erie--Persons of Note. The Early Settlers--The Military Organizations--The Hamot, Dobbins, Kelso and Reed Families.

AMONG the addresses in court last week on the death of Captain Hutchinson, that of ex-Senator Sill had a beautiful extract from an address of Martin VanBuren on a similar occasion. It was one of deep pathos and sincerity. There was something in the feeling manner of its quotation which drew the attention of the "Messenger" reporter, while it indicated the special regard and undisguised respect of the speaker for the renowned and historic character thus cited.

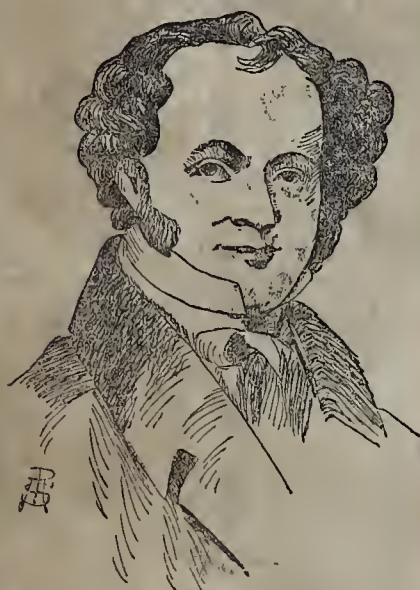
As the reporter soon afterwards met Mr. Sill some allusions brought out the fact that it had been his pleasing privilege, as a boy, to meet the ex-President

here, on one of the most notable occasions of Erie's early history. Deeming the incidents recounted most interesting, he consented to furnish the reporter in an interview, some of the circumstances of this reception; as alike a reminder to the old and instruction for the young, especially as relating to a period in Erie's history when but few of the present population were residents; and fewer still accustomed to retain the particulars of such an event in all their freshness.

To make the account of the reception explicit, it seemed proper to take in some of the circumstances; especially the condition and appearance of Erie then.

In answer to a question as to these points, Mr. Sill proceeded:

In the summer of 1842, Erie had about four thousand people. Its bounds were



MARTIN VAN BUREN, EIGHTH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Parade, Twelfth, and Chestnut streets. Few resided south of Tenth, or east of Mill Creek; while some dwellings were west of the partly constructed canal; which, commenced in 1837 or 1838, had for lack of funds, been abandoned by the state. No railroad was completed for nearly ten years later. Almost all communication was by the lake east and west and by the Waterford turnpike southward. The U. S. Steamer Michigan had not been built. The little cutter Erie's headquarters were at this harbor. The whole community seemed struggling with debt and financial depression. Business was almost all transacted on French street. Barter and the exchange of work for commodities or "store pay" was the main ingredient of all dealing.

The presidential campaign of 1840 had convulsed the land. Gen. Harrison, the Whig President, who on the fourth of March, 1841, (the preceding year) had succeeded President Van Buren, died after one month's tenure. His successor had broken with the party that elected him.

Ex-President Van Buren, rallying from his crushing defeat in 1840, appealing to the "sober second thought of the people," was making an extended tour; which, commenced in the winter of '41-'2, had occupied about six or seven months in traversing nineteen states. Erie county (including the boro) had then given a vote of nearly two to one with a majority of 1,575 for Harrison, while every ward, almost every township and all the public positions were officered by Whigs.

Small as was its population the appearance of this embryo city was then imposing and suggestive. The public dock, 1,200 feet long, from Front street to the wharf in front of the warehouses had been built from the proceeds of the sale in 1834, of the third section of land—after reserving the poor house farm. This land was two miles west of State street. Reed's wharf on the west, then enclosed the canal basin. Lake vessels were plying east and west, stopping at Erie. Numerous warehouses on the wharf, with their storage and large piles of steamboat wood imparted a business air, while the residences and gardens dotting the bank from Parade to Chestnut streets were interspersed with the Kellogg dwellings and grounds between Holland and French; the stately United States hotel, corner Second and French and the Hamot and Kelso residences, corner of Second and Front, in summer, gave a homelike look to this "frontier town."

The old block-house on Garrison Hill, built in 1813, and the sunken ships in Misery Bay, reminded of the war of 1812. The brick blocks erected on lower State, denoted the effort to make a future Broadway of State street.

The parks were then an unenclosed sand plain, as the gully from the present Park Church to the site of the Ellsworth House was being filled.

The Babbitt and Elliot brick houses on Peach, the Morris and Reed mansions on the south side of the park, and the Sanford dwelling on French street, were conspicuous. The first Reed House had been hastily completed for the Tippecanoe convention of September 10, 1840. Its row of stores and the continuous open fronts from Sixth to Fifth, furnished a receptacle for the clouds of dust from the sandy park. The four-story Reed House built on the model of the Astor House, with its wide front (as at present) was the Whig headquarters, and the three-story Eagle Tavern, fronting about 50 feet on the park, was regarded as the Democratic resort. It was destroyed by fire in 1851, and replaced by the hotel

lately known as the Ellsworth House. The little brick court-house built in 1824, north of the site of the soldiers monument, was then in use, and the market-house directly to the south, had been occupied three years. The old stone academy was in operation and Mr. Foster's Erie institute on Peach, and the female seminary was conducted in the U. S. Hotel. These, with five or six district schools in as many frame buildings, each

about 20 feet square, made up the educational facilities of that day.

Reporter—Was the reception of the ex-President a political event.

Mr. Sill—Only in part. It was on the second Monday of July, 1842, that word was received that ex-President Van Buren might be expected at Erie the next Wednesday. This occasioned much sensation. No living President or ex-President had, after his election, set foot in Erie. Mr. Van Buren had not only filled the office, but was the head of the Democratic party. He had been for ten or twelve years the active director of the government and for about twenty the practical head of the Democratic party. So complete was this identity that up to 1844 the party itself was known as the Van Buren party and his initials placed over election returns or party events.

The Erie Democrats were active in arranging the reception. A committee of arrangements of twenty-four was appointed, headed by Capt. Daniel Dobbins and a committee of four embracing Capt. Dobbins and Mr. Hamot dispatched to Cleveland to meet and escort the ex-President to Erie. All of these twenty-four but Col. D. S. Clark are dead.

The borough council, all Whigs, not one of whom were his political supporters, voted to extend a municipal welcome and invited Thomas H. Sill to welcome Erie's guest. The presiding officer of the council was Burgess Thomas Stewart, a Democrat, but elected Burgess over Rufus S. Reed as a People candidate. He was influential and popular and perhaps aided in this movement. Mr. Stewart, a native of New Hampshire, had come from the East. While at Albany in 1814 he was present at the trial by court-martial of Gen. William Hull for cowardice in the surrender of Michigan to the British. There he met Mr. Van Buren, then judge advocate in this case. Gen. Lewis Cass was also present as a witness, probably then meeting Mr. Van Buren for the first time. Van Buren and Cass were of the same age; both in ignorance of their splendid contemporary career as cabinet and foreign ministers and the great stakes to be played for with the presidency as the prize 20 years afterwards with the Presidency as the prize. Mr. Stewart was a central figure in this reception, and died about 15 years ago universally respected.

There was more zeal on the occasion for the people had no noted visitor of national renown since Gen. La Fayette in 1825.

The military were invited to participate. There were three military companies in Erie, Capt. Dutlinger's Erie Artillery Guards, a large German Democratic company, with brass band squad of pioneers with bear-skin hats and a six-pounder brass piece with cannoneers. Their blue-coated uniform with high hats and red and white plumes and excellent drill had presented a very marked appearance. Of this fine

company few remain. I think of Christopher Englehart, Sebastian Kinderly, Christopher Rilling, George Schlaudecker, John Gensheimer, Matthias Mayer, Frederick Curtze, Esq., and C. Van Busick and Capt. Beckman were the last of its surviving officers.

Messrs. Charles and Anthony Motsch are in the west.

There was also Capt. J. W. McLane, Wayne Grays, which had made their first appearance in uniform the week before. Their gray uniforms trimmed with silver lace, with black facing and green waving plumes made a fine appearance, especially as they had attained great perfection of drill of their full ranks, then there survive Judge W. A. Galbraith, A. P. Durlin, J. W. Hayes, D. Sterrett, N. Teel and D. Benson and Capt. Austin and L. P. Searles and A. A. Craig. Both of these companies agreed to come out. Capt. Erhart's Washington Guards—a number being outside of the city—did not accept the invitation.

All of these companies were a part of the One Hundred and Fourth Pennsylvania Regiment, under the command of Col. David S. Clark, an energetic, enthusiastic and thorough business young man, that year commissioned as colonel by Gov. Porter. The colonel's untiring efforts in behalf of the advancement of the military knowledge of the young men of Erie (aided by Lieut. Simpson, of the army) was lasting. Its effects were visible as regiment after regiment—some of them officered from these companies, marched from Erie to the defense of the Union.

It was especially gratifying to the Democrats to have this visit from the ex-President. He had been their standard-bearer in two presidential campaigns—those of 1836 and 1840—with all the political activities aroused in a community which Horace Greeley, after his residence here of nearly a year, said had more politics to the square rod than any other place he ever visited.

It was most agreeable to the Erie Democrats to have as a guest the accomplished, genial and courtly ex-President, whose learning, elegance of manner and purity of character were unquestioned. His career as senator, governor, secretary, President and vice president at Albany and Washington (except at London when he was in the same diplomatic corps of which Prince Talleyrand, French ambassador, was a member) was well-known. To have him in person instead of the caricatures of political processions, where thousands would take up the refrain of "Van, Van, is a Used-Up Man," was a relief. Besides, his restoration to power was expected at the next general election. He was in the meridian of life, in the full maturity of his abilities and destined yet to aid the country, but by "a path he then knew not of." The bright morning of his arrival was most cheering, as the procession formed with whatever of pomp and circumstance could be imparted. There was much to impress. At

11 o'clock the steamer Fairport steamed into the harbor. As she glided toward the foot of State street, under a salute of artillery, it was evident the people were for the first time to have the right of a living ex-President.

A procession of military, of committees, of municipal authorities and citizens was formed. Mr. VanBuren and his suits were seated in a barouch. The long public bridge with its double roadway was still in good repair. The weather was beautiful and a holiday had come, party lines had disappeared and all were given up to a day of enjoyment—and a very pardonable curiosity gratified. Personally, there was much to please the ex-President. This reception was in Erie, the only county of the whole northern tier of Pennsylvania, a county which had given a majority against him.

The address of welcome was to be made by Mr. Sill, a political opponent, whom he had met in public life at Washington as the only member of the Pennsylvania delegation of congressmen, who was not a Democrat.

The view of Erie, as it fronted on the bank, was, even then, commanding, as it rose upward to the Ridge road. It must have been especially gratifying to the ex-President as he passed up State street, to feel that on this, his first and only visit to this remote town, he was so surrounded by friends.

As the procession approached Second street, it passed the Hamot mansion, the elegant home of the courtly French gentleman seated in the same carriage, who had been under Mr. Van Buren's administration superintendent of the U. S. Public Works. West of State was the pretty home and garden of Mr. Kelso, embowered in flowers and shrubbery, the collector of customs under President Van Buren, with the ancient manorial dwelling of the pioneer Gen. John Kelso, where, with his family, colored servants, his fruits and flowers from the Cumberland Valley, he had settled in this wilderness. On Second street, just east, was the site of the memorable canopied dinner to Gen. La Fayette in 1825, and on French street, within a few feet, the route where carpets were laid for Perry and Harrison as they came in triumph from the battle of Lake Erie "bringing their captures with them." A little further east, was the home of the elder Capt. Richards and of Dr. Peter Christie, both identified with Perry's fleet and opposite the place which for nearly fifty years was yet to be renowned as the home of Mr. Van Buren's devoted and unfaltering friend, Senator Lowry. Continuing on his route, the next square was the home of the renowned lion-hearted Capt. Dobbins—the friend of Perry, of Jackson and of Van Buren, and the trusted revenue officer under the late administration. At his home Lafayette and Perry had been guests. Opposite on the west was the home of Gen. Reed to which a little before, he had brought his charming bride

(from Watertown, N. Y., from a part of the state teeming with friends of the ex-President); a lady who coming a stranger, had already commenced to gain that hold upon the regard and affection of the community which now a half century later is still held.

Opposite was the McAllister family, also from Northern New York. Between Fourth and Fifth streets on State street was something for deep reflection. There was the marble building of the United States Bank, which had so long grappled with Jackson and Van Buren, for recharter. It was a battle of giants under which the whole country had shaken. Defeated in this application for extension of corporate existence, its request had been granted by Pennsylvania, which made it a state institution. This marble building had been erected for its banking house in Erie. Already it had been forced into an assignment and liquidation under the duress of which it was then struggling. The log cabin, almost directly across from the marble building on State street, the headquarters in the Tippecanoe campaign had been removed, and the old chieftain was sleeping his last sleep at North Bend on the banks of the Ohio. As I have since reflected upon that reception and spectacle, I have thought of the mutations of life it presented. In the reception the central figure was the defeated, but not dejected, candidate of 1840. Those streets had a little before echoed and re-echoed the refrain, "Van, Van is a used up man." Harrison, the victor, had, after a month of power, been carried to his grave, and the Whig party had been massed against his successor in that campaign so celebrated as "Tyler too." Now the defeated candidate of 1844, full of life and hope, moved in joyful state with all of Erie's honors, through the same streets, attended by part of the same escort which had the preceding year rendered funeral honors to the memory of the lately idolized Harrison. It is sad to reflect that of the long array of German soldiers, their names since identified with Erie, only those mentioned as above are surviving residents. And of the Wayne Grays, who then made their second appearance in uniforms, having on the Fourth of July the week before, first come out in uniform—when they received their crimson flag, from the same hand that this day welcomed the ex-President—its members then so young, really of the flower of Erie, but nine, as above stated, now survive in Erie. Thus the procession passed up State to Ninth, following the route of the funeral procession of President Harrison the year before—across on Ninth to Peach and back to the park.

Then on State, above the park, there were but three brick business blocks—the extension of the American Hotel—now Jarecki's, near the park; the Hughes's Block (702 State street) the Perry Block (now Mayo and Dickinson's) one of them first occupied by William J. Gordon, a

faithful Scotchman, who, taking an Erie wife, went to Cleveland and became the noted philanthropist of continental celebrity. The R. S. Reed house, corner Park. and the D. Burton house, the Perkins residence, on State, where the Olds Block now stands, the Judge Thompson House, corner of Ninth and the Wittich Block, were all the other brick buildings then on State. The procession halted at a stand in front of the Eagle Tavern, where the addresses were made.

Reporter: "I would like much to see the addresses, if you have them."

Mr. Sill—"I obtained them years ago and have them carefully preserved; as relating to an occasion which greatly impressed me."

The reporter deemed a few extracts from these exquisitely worded addresses as worthy of quotation.

In his address Mr. Sill said:

"After the extended tour you have taken, in the progress of which you have passed through the fair and fertile regions of the west and visited these beautiful cities which have sprung up, upon their great rivers, and now vie with the emporiums of the Atlantic in wealth, in population and all the arts and elegancies of life, we can hardly hope that you will find here so many objects calculated to interest and entertain you. Yet there are interesting circumstances connected with the early and late periods of the history of this place and the region that surrounds us, calculated to arrest attention and call forth reflections of an interesting character. While this country was in the occupancy of the French, this point was selected as the most important one for the establishment of the military post. The great object of France to sever the territory of the west from the Atlantic territories of Great Britain was defeated, but this circumstance shows the great importance then attached to this point.

At a gloomy period of the late war, when it was determined to construct a naval armament and recover the command of the lakes, this spot was selected as the most suitable of all to effect that object. Here the first American fleet that ever met and conquered the enemy in squadron, was constructed. From this port Perry sailed in quest of the enemy. To this place he returned bearing in triumph the flag of his country.

To the mind of a statesman, who like yourself have been accustomed to grasp at one view all the interests of a mighty nation, to consider the distant portions of this great empire with each other and the causes which promote the prosperity of all, these facts may give rise to important and interesting reflections.

"I shall now conclude by assuring you, sir, of the sincere wishes of the authorities of this place, as well as the citizens at large, that your sojourn here may be agreeable, that the remainder of your journey may be safe and pleasant, and that you will carry with you their best

wishes for your health and happiness."

In reply, Mr. Van Buren stated he had listened with much pleasure to the remarks upon the town of Erie and of past events, connected with its history. He was greatly pleased with its appearance from the lake, and the view he had taken in passing through its streets was encouraging. He hoped it was as flourishing as the enterprise and industry of its inhabitants desired. The facts adverted to by Mr. Sill were full of interest and sufficient to give character to the tone, and cause every American to desire its welfare."

"The belief should serve to increase our attachment to our enviable system of government, which, besides exalting the character of man, so obviously contributed to his temporal interests in a greater degree, than any other. It should induce us to do all in our power to preserve it in its original purity and to prevent all abuses of the privileges we enjoy. The preservation of the Union was, as Mr. Sill had observed, a vital element of safety as well to our government as to our people. His faith in its perpetuity had never been shaken. All that is necessary to its preservation is that the states and people should honestly, faithfully and sincerely adhere to the great landmarks of the Federal Constitution. He returned thanks for the obliging manner of their reception. His acknowledgements were due to Mr. Sill for the courteous manner in which he had communicated the sentiments of his townsmen and corporate authorities."

While his stay would be short he would be pleased to take by the hand all who might call.

At the conclusion of the address the ex-President received with characteristic courtesy all who called. It was an appreciated honor for Major Brown, the landlord of the Eagle Tavern (his Democracy often attested by a branching hickory pole in front and his loyalty by a golden eagle) thus to entertain a President though Senator James Buchanan had been here in 1840 and Salmon P. Chase later on.

Several incidents were long remembered which merit reproduction.

It was stated that as the Wayne Grays formed in review and their names mentioned Mr. Van Buren afterwards recalled the names of so many as revealed his wonderfully retentive memory.

Standing in one of the apartments of the hotel, Mr. Robt. Vosburg (father of Albert Vosburg) was near the entrance of the room where the ex-President was. The latter seeing him, stated he thought he knew him. It was found that the two recognized each other, as boys in Kinderhook, perhaps 40 or 45 years before, and a hearty greeting followed.

After dinner and remaining sometime at the hotel, at 5 p. m. the ex-President went to Mr. Hamot's house, where the ladies of Erie were received as they called. At 9 o'clock p. m. he embarked in the same steamer for Buffalo.

It afterward came to me in a round-about way, through Ohio friends, that Mr. Van Buren stated that he had visited 19 states on this tour and he was more pleased with his Erie reception than that of any other place in his route.

It was also stated that in this tour as ladies at some point were welcomed, and as the ex-President was about to kiss a Whig lady she drew back and said: "There lips have smug too many Whig songs for you to kiss. It shows the great equanimity of Mr. Van Buren, that in this tour he visited Henry Clay at Ashland and the latter's mortal foe, Andrew Jackson, at the Hermitage.

It was also stated that on this trip Abram Lincoln was but 33, the ex-President met him and discovered in the young lawyer a remarkable character as he stated.

Reporter—Please give me your impressions of the ex-President—as carefully as you have described his visit.

Mr. Sil—It is asking a good deal of one, who as a boy, was presented to so noted a personage—this long afterwards for his judgment.

As I remember him, he was not tall but seemed very pleasant as he took my hand. His coal-black eyes and wide expressive face would attract as indicating a marked character. It was a great event for a boy to shake hands with a President of the United States.

Considering his remarkable success, his fidelity to his friends, his self-possession at all times, his pleasing manners, his facility of diction, his grasp of every question brought before him, and the tenacity (as with hooks of steel) with which he held his friends; and the learned, pure and upright men he had around him, many of whom he placed in office, I consider him, taking him altogether, as without a peer as a politician and statesman combined. He was the only American that was governor, minister to England, secretary of state, vice-president and President. A study of the characters and careers of the great men who came between those who set the government in motion and those contemporary with the Rebellion warrants me in saying Clay was more eloquent, imperious and impulsive, but apt to be carried away or swayed by some overwhelming influence. Calhoun, more subtle in argument and dogmatic in statement, had the tenacity of his Scotch-Irish race, making him, when wrong, persistently so. But Van Buren with the mental strength, readiness, versatility and tact of the Dutch, was for some twenty-four years a mastermind in American politics—not like the others generally in a minority, but with the exception of the reverse of 1840, the master mind and organizer of victory of the Democratic party.

When unable with respect to his convictions to recover the highest seat of power, he did what perhaps no other man could; he ultimately went into op-

position, taking with him in his own state more than remained—in the party fold.

He stifled the dangerous theory of squatter sovereignty. Though like Sampson (who when he fell and brought down the temple with him) the result directly gave to the Union free California.

It is to his credit that rather than favor Texas annexation, he came out in opposition. Though he lost the presidency, he made a record for candor that stands to his perpetual honor.

My study of his character shows his polish of manner, ever evident. He was always polite, cheerful and self-possessed. He never acted upon impulse or was taken by surprise either in triumph or defeat. His courtesy to friend and foe never forsook him. The very remark, regarding the dead he (alluded to in the commencement of this interview) related to one to whom he was in active political opposition.

His serenity in retirement was happily indicated in his last will, there in describing himself, he says: "I, Martin Van Buren, formerly governor of New York, senator and President of the United States, but for the last, and far happiest, 20 years of my life, farmer of Kinderhook, do make this my will."

Reporter—I am greatly obliged for your attention, and perhaps may hereafter call upon you, as something else needs your careful observation.

From,

News
Erie Post

Date,

Feb. 19th 1894

A LANDMARK

At Cross's, on the Erie & Pitts. R. R.
About to be Eliminated.

The Erie & Pittsburgh R. R. Co., on Saturday commenced to fill the Cross's trestle, one of the most famous landmarks in the early railroad construction in this section of the country. The trestle is about 150 feet high and is 500 feet in length. This trestle, although built of wood, has never had an accident of any particular note, but the cost of keeping it in repair is so much that the company, like the Phila. & Erie R. R. Co. with the Belle Valley trestle, has decided to fill it. Cinders will be brought up from the valley as fast as they can be supplied by the furnaces. The company will run all the way from one or two cars to 25 per day to the trestle.

From, *Messenger*

Eric Pa.

Date, *May 20* 1894.

INTERESTING HISTORY.

The Removal of the Colt and Reid Homesteads.

Incidents of Old Erie Recalled—Eminent Men Who Took a Prominent Part in Developing the Gem City of the Lakes. Lafayette and Horace Greeley Entertained—Old Landmarks Being Removed from Sites Which Were at One Time the Principal Section of the City.

Within a short time many of the oldest and best preserved houses in the city of Erie have been removed to make room for palatial residences, modern stores and hives of industry. The march of improvement goes steadily on in the Gem City of the Lakes and our older citizens are given an opportunity to relate many interesting incidents about old Erie. The attention of a "Messenger" reporter was called a few days since to the removal of the Colt homestead at French and Fourth streets and the Reid homestead on East Seventh street by an anonymous correspondent who hinted that much historical information could be given to the public concerning both of these buildings if an interview could be obtained with some of our citizens who were in a position to give the information desired.

Anxious to present to the "Messenger" readers the historical associations which these old landmarks in question helped to preserve the reporter took the liberty to call upon ex-Senator James Sill, whose contributions to the local press toward the preservation of local history have been so frequent and interesting. The reporter was cordially received by Mr. Sill, who, by the way, is always ready to accommodate the news-gatherers of Erie, and when the object of the visit was stated—namely, to secure some information concerning the landmarks about to be obliterated—Mr. Sill kindly consented to talk and therefore the "Messenger" is this morning in a position to present the following interesting history:

THE OLD COLT HOMESTEAD.

"The removal of the Colt homestead from the southwest corner of French and Fourth streets, obliterates a cherished landmark redolent of historic and personal associations, and intimately connected with the foundation and advancement of Erie. It was built early in the century for the home of Mr. Jndah Colt, then probably the foremost citizen of Erie, and so occupied until his death in 1832. Before that Mr. Colt's history had been almost identical with that of the county. He came to the lake shore wilderness in 1795 and to the town of Erie in 1806. In the meanwhile having purchased largely of land and having been made agent of the Population Company, his land office became the source of title for much of this county. His home was a central point in the social life of the whole region, from which there went out an influence of the highest type, warming into life all the better feelings and refined sentiments. This influence was more far-reaching and abiding in its character from its unfaltering and open-handed support of morality and religion. It upheld all the advance couriers in their efforts to plant their standard upon the wild lake shore. Mr. Colt was a native of Lyme, Conn. He first came in 1795. The remoteness of Erie and its isolation from the comforts of civilization at that time, will be better understood when it is stated that upon his coming it was found that United States troops were building a fort and the state commissioners were laying out the town. He and his companion then bought eight hundred acres of land, at one dollar per acre, payable in five annual instalments. On the 3d of March, 1796, he started for Philadelphia. Having done his business there, he went to New York city, and in April purchased provisions and supplies for his return to Erie. His goods were shipped up the Hudson to Albany, across the portage by wagon to the Mohawk, up that river by boats, thence to Oswego, and from there by lake and wagons to this place, the goods arriving July 1, 1796. From that time forward his various adventures, the litigations over land titles, his journeys to Philadelphia and New England, and his persistent efforts to settle the country and secure to each deserving purchaser his home, regardless of the long delay which a frontier war, and the ensuing distress and vicissitudes had caused in this country, made his life very eventful. Mr. Colt was equal to the emergency. Men of national fame had before that selected him for high duties. Gov. George Clinton, of New York, had made him the first sheriff of Ontario county, New York, and the noted Col. Aaron Burr had tendered him his life position as agent of the Population Company. His land transactions covered a vast area.

"Mr. Colt was the founder, chief supporter and first elder of the First Presbyterian Church of Erie. His home was

of traveling missionaries and of early pastors. The grounds attached to his dwelling embraced a beautiful flower garden, with shrubs and fruits. These grounds extended from French to State streets. As the United States Bank marble building—since used as post-office and custom-house—was erected in 1836-7, its site was detached from this historic residence.

LA FAYETTE ENTERTAINED.

"The large southeastern apartment of the old homestead, perhaps then the most spacious parlor in Erie, was the place where Gen. LaFayette (then the nation's guest) on the third of June, 1825, received the ladies of Erie. The general seated with Mr. Colt in the Dearborn carriage of the latter, had on that day (escorted by a large civic and military procession) entered Erie on his triumphal tour of the United States. My mother, the last survivor of those ladies who participated in that reception, told me that Mr. Colt said that the occasion was the happiest day of his life. This residence was noted for its unstinted and abounding hospitality. It was Mr. Colt's home that first received his relatives the Marvins, the Seldens, the Spencers, the Elys and the Griswolds—that New England contingent which has ever since been so powerful an auxiliary in the settlement, advancement and elevation of this county.

As the introduction of Sunday-schools into Erie was in 1818, after Mrs. Colt had returned from the east, under the united efforts of Mrs. Colt and Mrs. R. S. Reed, the ample space of the Colt homestead could thus be utilized, also the large hall or conference room of the brick building across French street erected by Mr. Colt. Its use was given to the church up to 1841:

One who knew Mr. Colt thus described him to me: "His money, his influence, his counsel, all were at the disposal of the church. He looked after its prosperity with much the same solicitude that a tender parent does for the success of an only son. An elegant man was Mr. Colt, and so cunningly had nature chiseled kindness in his face, that he had but to look at his man to make him a propagandist of the faith. And his smile, so childlike and bland, drew all men unto him."

Another said of him: "Almost the first settler in the wilderness, through his own influence and that of the relatives whom his presence attracted, he did more than any other man to fashion aright the moral and religious life of this community. His works do follow him. The impress of his life is upon the best, the sacred institutions of our city."

In the history of this town no name is deserving a higher place of honor than that of Judah Colt. Not long subsequently to a great revival like Enoch, he was not, for God took him. Sitting by his own fireside, near the table, in usual health, an October even-

ing of 1832, without a groan or struggle, he passed beyond this veil into the fullness of light."

HONORABLE CAREER ENDED.

"Mr. Colt's death in 1832, followed by Mrs. Colt's in 1834, caused the occupancy of the home by others, including his kinsmen, Messrs. George Selden and Thomas G. Colt, the latter having become its owner and occupant for a quarter of a century up to his death in the early sixties. Thomas G. Colt, father of George P. Colt, was the first mayor of Erie after its incorporation in 1851. French street was in the early part of the century not only the main business but the residence street. Rufus S. Reed's store and home were at the corner of French and Fifth. Col. Thomas Forster's dwelling, with its piazzas and grounds, at the corner of French and Fifth, Judge Bell's at corner of French and Sixth, and Mr. Sanford's at the opposite corner of French and Sixth. Col. Forster was collector of the port for thirty-five years, up to his death in 1835 or 6.

"It was remarkable that simultaneously with the removal of this noted landmark another of nearly equal antiquity and nearly as conspicuous center of influence should have disappeared. It was the old home of Rev. Robt. Reid, on Seventh street, from which he was buried 50 years ago this month. East Seventh street, between Holland and French, was for years a noted part of old Erie. On the site of school building No. 2, at Seventh and Holland, there stood the early log school-house built in 1806, on a lot procured for educational purposes. It was used for public meetings, public worship and schools. Near it was the home of "Parson" Reid just removed. A little west was the home of Judge Sterrett where Horace Greeley in 1831 remained during his stay in Erie. It was also the place of residence of Hon. Thomas Wilson, several times congressman in the days of President Madison.

A NOTED THEOLOGIAN.

The parsonage of the Associate Reformed (now U. P. Church) was owned and occupied by Rev. Robert Reid, its first pastor from 1811 to 1844. There this noted theologian, author and instructor passed his life. As this building, with its attractive flower and fruit garden, was so long the home of the only resident pastor in Erie, it was, considering the remarkable personality of its distinguished occupant, a central point in old Erie. But with the added charm of the large and popular family of the minister, with the increased dignity and literary tone which the not infrequent addition of the principal of the Erie academy gave to it, this home, modest as it was in proportions and unpretentious in style was yet one of the places the open handed hospitality and unwearying welcome of which were most cheerfully accepted. It was also the home of Hon. James C. Reid and his brilliant family, Dr.

Robt. R. Carpenter, and of the three daughters, on the mother of Frank Carpenter, whose wide travels and graphic reports so delight the reading public.

"But these homes are now but a memory. While other Erie residences in all their stateliness have arisen, to the embellishment of which the art and treasures of Europe and America have contributed with their varied surroundings of comfort and elegancies of modern life. It may well be doubted whether any two or half a dozen of the score of Erie palatial residences will or can exert a more beneficial and enduring influence upon the surrounding country or be remembered with a more gratified sense of the lifelong and self-sacrificing efforts of the exemplary, patriotic and God-fearing men whose names and good deeds have been so intimately associated with these time-honored homes, which have during the past month 'gone the way of all the earth.'"

From, *Dispatch*
Erie Pa.
Date, *July 6" 1894.*

A BIT OF LOCAL HISTORY.

An Interesting Addition to the Annals of Erie County.

ERIE, Pa. *74* July 5.

To the Editor of the DISPATCH:

In the History of Erie County I have seen the name of John W. Hay in connection with a military company of long ago. As lovers of local history may be interested, I write to say that before me lies a letter written by him to his father, Col. Wm. Hay of Dauphin county, Pa., dated at Erie, Sept. 10, 1799. He says: "I have brought on a very good assortment of articles, well chosen for this place, which will command a very handsome profit. My captaincy was forfeited in consequence of my not coming forward in time. The result was a new election. It took place four days previous to my coming. The people insisted upon me being their commander and gave me a majority at the second election, notwithstanding my being absent for nearly fourteen months."

In 1800 he removed to Vincennes, then the capital of Indiana territory, Gen. Harrison governor. Mr. Hay was a soldier in the battle of Tippecanoe, was a successful merchant, postmaster, and an elder in the Presbyterian church. He died in Vincennes in 1840, aged 65. Henry G. Hay, centennial commissioner for Wyoming and President of the Stockgrowers National bank of Chey-

enne, is a grandson.
Yours, etc.

JOSEPH VANCE,
Pastor Second Presbyterian Church,
CHESTER, Pa., June 26, 1894.

From, *Derrick*
Oil City Pa.
Date, *Sept. 3" 1894.*

HISTORIC WATERFORD.

An Erie County Town Full of Pleasant Memories.

The little village of Waterford, in Northwestern Pennsylvania, only fourteen miles from Lake Erie, is of great and curious interest, for it stands at the end of the famous Portage path which connected what is now the city of Erie with the waters of the Ohio and its tributaries. This portage was not only used by the aborigines from time immemorial, but it was used by the white men from the earliest periods of discovery and colonization.

The route was a very simple and easy one. From where the city of Erie now is to the headwaters of French creek was a short land carriage, and then the canoes or batteaux were floated down French creek to the Allegheny and down the Allegheny to the Ohio.

It was very fortunate for the American cause, in the war of 1812, that French creek, which at times would persist in becoming too shallow for use, was full enough for navigation in the year which the fleet of Commodore Perry was fitted out, for quite a proportion of the supplies for the fleet came from Pittsburg, by way of this route, up the streams to Waterford, at the head of French creek, and then overland to Erie. Canvas and cables for the vessel were carried by this portage route, as well as anchors and some cannon, and had French creek not been deep enough for the boats, thus loaded to pass up, the fleet of Perry would not have been equipped in time to fight the battle of Lake Erie as it did.

A Still More Curious

Association of history with this old portage and with the village of Waterford, is that in 1753, when George Washington was a young man of but twenty-one years of age, he visited the French fort which had just been erected on the spot where the village of Waterford now stands. Neither Fort Pitt nor Fort Duquesne had been erected at that time, and it is certainly a most curious fact that Washington

should have been so far into the unbroken wilderness and almost upon the very edge of Lake Erie.

Washington's character cannot be understood, without taking into consideration his inborn love for danger and adventure and for plunging into wild and unmapped forests. He seized with alacrity upon all possible opportunities of gratifying this venturesome fancy, and this explains how it was that as a youth of eighteen he was a surveyor among the Alleghenies; that at twenty-one he was on a hazardous mission to the French commander at the head of French creek; that he secured the commission that took him to Great Meadows, and that he could refer to that place as "a charming field for an encounter," that he was with the unfortunate expedition of Braddock, and afterwards with the luckier expedition of Forbes; and that in 1770 he was far down the Ohio, below the Muskingum and the Hocking, examining and exploring the unsettled land and meeting with

Indian Sachems and Sagamores.

This spirit of daring and adventure will also explain how it was that he could write, in a letter to his brother after the skirmish at Great Meadows: "I heard the bullets whistle, and, believe me, there is something charming in the sound." This spirit was also recognized by others, while he was young, for, after Braddock's defeat, Lord Halifax, in England, said: "Who is Mr. Washington? They say he behaved in Braddock's action as bravely as if he really loved the whistling of bullets." It is remarkable that Lord Halifax's estimate of Washington's spirit and Washington's description of himself should have been expressed in almost exactly the same words.

And so it was that he accepted eagerly the chance of penetrating into the wilds, when offered the commission of ambassador to interview the French on French creek. He did not, to be sure, succeed in getting from the French commander the kind of answer that he hoped for, but he got a very definite one, and one that could by no possibility be misunderstood, namely, that the French were going to push forward down the Ohio in spite of anything that the English might say or do. And so, after getting his answer to carry back to Virginia, and after carefully observing the construction and defenses of the fort,

He Returned Homewards.

Lafayette, at the time of his famous visit to America in 1824 and 1825, visited Waterford because of its associations with Washington's early career, and in the little village he spent one night. There is still living there an old, old lady, exceedingly pleasant, and in spite of her age, with black hair, very slim, and with a remarkably preserved figure—looking as though she

had just stepped out of one of Mary Wilkin's charming sketches, for she is quite of the New England type—who will tell you, when she shakes hands with you, that you are holding the hand that has been held by Lafayette.

In the village there is an old stone hotel, a quaint old structure, old-fashioned in style and build, and containing many a charming old-fashioned nook. On the upper floor there is an old-fashioned ball room, running the width of the building, and it has a dome roof, and it has an old-fashioned platform built at one side, and railed in, where the musicians seated themselves, and it has benches all around the wall.

We met, while at the hotel, an old citizen of the place, who proceeded, with all imaginable courtesy, to tell us some of the peculiarities of the town. He said that when Lafayette was there he stopped at this hotel, and he showed us a window from which the famous Frenchman spoke to a crowd that had assembled, and he showed us the very room that he had occupied, and the very bedstead.

Upon Which He Had Rested.

"And this hotel was built in what year?"

"Oh, just the year that is outside there, in stone figures."

"Yes, I see. But how could Lafayette, who was in Waterford in 1825, be at this hotel, which was not built until 1826."

"Oh, I thought he was here in 1825."

And after that we could not but mistrust that old inhabitant.

The town of Waterford is a rather pleasant, quiet little place, and has never grown to such a size as was once expected of it. It was not until quite

a time after the ratification of the treaty of peace with Great Britain that settlers began to come into this region, for the British continued for years to obstinately hold the western posts that they had agreed to give up, and American settlements were thus rendered impossible.

But the British soldiers did get away at last, and then the settlers began to come in. It was about 1795 that the first pioneers settled in the county.

A few years before this the Pennsylvania government, in a fit of public spiritedness, decided to do something munificent for the country which they knew was soon to be occupied. They sent men to examine the condition of the ancient water route, and, after receiving a report, appropriated the magnificent sum of one hundred pounds for the improvement of

Navigation on French Creek.

It was of very much more real importance that the same government, fearing that pioneer settlers would be annoyed by Indians, had a couple of small block-houses built at Le Boeuf;

the spot that is, where the old French fort of that name had stood, and where the future village of Waterford was to arise. This was followed by the construction of a strong stockade post with four block-houses, and this fort was still standing in quite recent years. So strong an impression had this American-built fort made on the imagination of the residents, that most of them think that it was the only fort that was ever built there.

We found it intensely interesting to stand on the very spot that marked the limit of Washington's personal advance toward the northwest. In spirit, indeed, he went much further, in later life, for he made a careful study of the resources and needs of the west, and urged the importance of developing and opening the country. He was strongly interested, for example, in the permanent improvement of the route up the Cuyahoga, from where Cleveland now stands to the portage near Akron, and down the Tuscarawas and Muskingum to the Ohio.

But his personal advance was marked by the limits of French creek, and thus it is that French creek valley and the village of Waterford must always be of special interest.—Robert Shackleton, Jr., in Pittsburg Leader.

From, *Dispatch*

Erie Pa

Date, *Sept 18/95*

ANCIENT AND PROUD OF IT

**Waterford's Centennial Celebration
Was a Fete Day.**

7,000 PEOPLE HELPED IT ALONG.

**What the Past Century Has Done for the
Old Borough and What the Fu-
ture Has in Store.**

Waterford, Sept. 17.—(Special.)—Any one who should return to Waterford to-day after an absence of several years would find himself at a loss to recognize his whereabouts. The old boro has put on her holiday dress and the stars and stripes are flying from every place of business and every private dwelling. Waterford is entertaining more visitors to-day than ever before in her history. The exodus from the farms and villages of the country round began early this morning until there are now at least 7,000 people within the limits of the town. And the occasion of this great fete day is the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the settlement of the borough. If we are to judge of the future of Waterford from the manner in which her second century is being ushered in, we must prophesy for her a new existence. Phoenix-like, a new town is being born from the ashes of the destructive fire of last March, and the handsome new business blocks, now almost completed, rising to take the place of the old-fashioned wooden buildings, betoken a new era of business activity in the old town of Waterford. The spirit of patriotism and progress which is manifesting itself in every person present, old and young witness to the rejuvenating impulses which are ruling the great occasion.

The Ancient Borough's Past.

Last night a well attended historical meeting was held in the Park Opera House, and the younger generation were treated to a series of historical and reminiscent articles from the pens of the older inhabitants. After the invocation by Rev. P. W. Free, and the singing of the national hymn, "America," by a selected chorus of about one hundred voices, the chairman of the meeting, Hon. Wm. Benson, announced that the essay on the "History of Waterford" prepared by himself, would be read by Prof. Frank C. Rex. Facts concerning the foundation and settlement of this old town were set forth, showing that after the English occupation of this section of the country, settlers flocked from the east to this place, already famous as the site of old Fort LeBoeuf, where Washington in December, 1753, delivered to the French commandant, the letter of Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia. The fort was burned by the Indians, and the garrison massacred in 1763. The struggles of the early settlers were dilated upon, and the history of business in Waterford briefly sketched. The first store was opened in 1806, the Erie and Waterford road incorporated in 1804. General Lafayette visited here on his return to this country in 1825, and General Bertrand aide-de-camp to Napoleon, in 1842. Gen-

eral Zachary Taylor, then president of the United States, passed through the town on his northern tour in 1848 and was entertained by the citizens of Waterford at the Erie hotel. Waterford was made a borough in 1833 and a special election district in 1844.

The Time-Honored Academy.

Clinton H. Bolard read a "History of Waterford Academy," which institution and the Eagle hotel are almost the only remaining buildings of the days of the first quarter of this century. In 1811, an act of legislature was passed incorporating this ancient institution, and naming eight prominent citizens of the place as its trustees. It was granted an endowment of land in the vicinity, which, having been afterward sold, provided the funds necessary for the buildings, and for the present endowment fund. The old Academy building was erected in 1822, and the first term of school opened in 1827, with John Wood as principal.

In 1853 the school had grown to such proportions that it was considered necessary to build an annex to the original edifice, which was accordingly done. And again in 1873, it was found necessary for the accommodation of non resident students, to erect a spacious boarding hall.

The success of the institution from its foundation up to the present time has been uniform. Diplomas were first given in 1877, and since that year 127 graduates have departed from its walls. Its success for the beginning of the second century of Waterford's history is assured in its management by Prof. Frank C. Rex, who, with a corps of efficient teachers, has already begun the year's work.

It might be stated in passing that a movement is likely to be set on foot by the citizens of this borough to re-incorporate the old Academy as a college under the act of 1895. Surely nothing would be a more evident sign of the determination of the citizens of Waterford to establish a New Waterford, than to make it a centre of learning. As an educational centre it is almost ideal, being beautifully and healthfully located, and commanding a stretch of country of fifty miles radius with almost no rival institutions to contend with.

In Reminiscent Vein.

The Centennial chorus sang the famous

"Anvil Chorus," from Verdi's opera of *Il Trovatore*, after which Mr. P. W. McKay read an article on "Personal Reminiscences," prepared by Miss Zoe Farrar. Mr. McKay also read the article on "The Beginning of Things," which was written by Mrs. Isabel Austin after which Miss Jennie Johnson, accompanied by the chorus, sang "The Star Spangled Banner." Mr. Harry O. Woodward read the "History of Journalism in Waterford," and then the floor was offered the chairman to whoever might desire to say anything of especial interest to the occasion.

J. L. Cook, an old citizen of nearly

ninety years of age, kindly responded to a call for a song and for a man of his years sang very creditably a couple of stanzas of "Maggie and I." The chairman then introduced Hon. J. P. Vincent of Erie, one of the oldest living persons born in Waterford, who made a brief address after which the audience, rising, sang "Old Lang Syne," and adjourned, full of that enthusiasm which ought always to be present at the birth of a new century of history.

The Industrial Parade.

A grand parade was the main feature of this morning's celebration. Forming on First street, the procession, headed by the Coleman band of Union City, and followed by the G. A. R. the borough officials, the hose company, the public school children, the academy students, the Y. M. C. A., numerous fantastics and industrial floats, made a complete tour of the town and disbanded again at First street.

During the interim between the morning parade and the celebration exercises of the afternoon, a steady stream of visitors poured into the chapel room of the old academy to see the elaborate exhibition of quaint old relics of historical and antiquarian interest. There were to be seen all sorts of curious old weapons, domestic utensils, and articles of apparel used by the early settlers. Waterford's first piano, of the old harpsichord or spinnet pattern, and made in London during the last century, was on exhibit. Only one other like it is known to exist in Erie county. The academy was therefore the central point of the day's celebrations, being not only the headquarters of the exhibitions, but figuring upon the official souvenirs as well.

The Afternoon and Evening.

The afternoon exercises were held in West Park where the oration of the day was delivered by the Hon. E. A. Walling, of Erie. The remainder of the afternoon was rendered entertaining by various field sports, including a hotly contested base ball game between Waterford and Wattsburg. In the evening the whole town was resplendent in its gorgeous illumination and Japanese decorations. The entire occasion from beginning to finish was well managed, and the object of the centennial, which was to inaugurate an era of renewed prosperity in Waterford, bids fair to be realized in the very near future.

Erie Well Represented.

Among the Erie people present were noticed Hon. Walter Scott, Hon. F. A. Mizener, G. T. Churchill, John M. Glazier, Dr. Strickland, C. S. Marks, Harry Vincent, John Fleeharty, F. Bre-villier, G. F. Brevillier, R. W. Walker, E. J. Riplet, C. J. Brown, W. J. Robinson, J. D. Hay, W. H. Sandusky.

From,

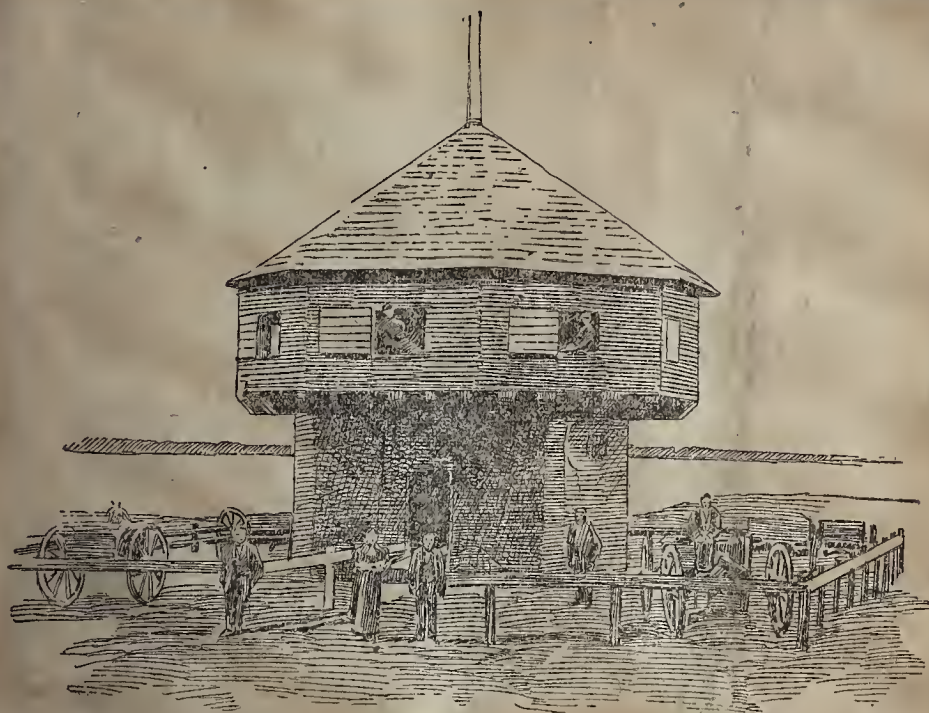
Lucius
Philada PA

Date,

Sept 8 1875

embraces a great variety of entertainment, including historic pageants, grand military display, State meet of the L. A. W., Yacht Regatta, a Midway Plaisance, historic fair, monster concert, a special display of fireworks and other features.

In 1793, Thomas Rees, the first permanent white settler under the Pennsylvania law, located at the mouth of Mill creek, on the now historic Garrison ground (that was a little later to be the scene of stirring events in the war of 1812-14), within the present corporate limits of Erie, and sought to establish peaceful domain over a beautiful country that for almost two cen-



THE BLOCK HOUSE AT ERIE—GENERAL WAYNE'S MONUMENT.

THE ERIE CENTENNIAL

THE LAKE CITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PREPARING FOR HER
ALL-IMPORTANT ANNIVERSARY—HER HISTORY
AND HER GROWTH.

From a Correspondent of THE TIMES.

ERIE, Pa., September 5.

On the 10th of September next (the anniversary of one of the greatest events in the history of the Northwest), Erie will begin to formally observe the one hundredth anniversary of her existence as an organized community with a celebration that will be worthy of the occasion, and in the day and details will accord proper recognition to the famous naval battle of Lake Erie, with which Erie had so much to do. The programme, covering a period of three days,

tries prior had been alternately the scene of bloody aboriginal feud and French and English intrigue and warfare. He was soon made to realize that his task was no light one—that the territory so long in dispute was still debatable ground, and that might was to be yet the arbiter. Mr. Rees and the other pioneers who had come a little later were finally compelled to postpone until 1795 their plan of settlement, when, under the protection of an armed force, they succeeded in establishing a colony on the present site of Erie, with an organized local government and well-matured plans for the development of a city, including surveys that

embraced several miles of streets and blocks. The lots were sold at auction to the highest bidder, and the settlers guaranteed military protection. But this was not to end the tribulations of the hardy pioneers. It was only after General Authouy Wayne, in 1812-14, had thoroughly cowed and intimidated the Indians, and, in conjunction with Commodore Perry, swept their English allies from the south shores of the lake, that anything better than an armed truce was afforded the first settlers of Erie county.

It was a hardly won land; but how glorious in its riches and resources. The streams and lakes teemed with food fish; the forests were stocked with game; the soil was a veritable garden spot in fertility, and the climate the finest in the Commonwealth—perhaps in the world.

Under the influence of such undaunted and resourceful pioneers as Thomas Rees, Rufus S., Seth and George W. Reed, David McNair, George Moore, Martin Strong, William Miles, Samuel Holliday, the Cranes, Judah Colt, the Dunns, Daniel Dobbins, Thomas Forster, William Wallace, General Kelso, Captain John Grub, Captain Robert King and a long list of others, equally deserving of mention, the country rapidly developed.

Population companies early took an active part in this development, by securing large bodies of land and locating settlers upon it; and this led eventually to much litigation, by reason of disputes which arose as to

priority of title between settlers and the land companies, because of a provision of the land law which recognized the validity of title of any settler or grantee to land, which had to be temporarily abandoned by reason of the hostility of the Indians. This contest of the land companies to secure recognition under this law was long and bitter and involved some valuable tracts. It resulted adversely to the "squatter settlers, and many of them abandoned the country in disgust and bitterness of spirit, and the fight left an ugly feeling that did not soon disappear.

The war of 1812 necessitated the establishing of a naval equipment on the Lakes, and Erie, Pennsylvania's only lake port, was selected as the most desirable site for a navy and shipyard; and it was in this shipyard that the historic brigs, Lawrence and Niagara, were built, together with other vessels of Commodore Perry's famous fleet (and in a small bay on the south shore of the peninsula the Niagara, the sole survivor today of all the vessels that took part in the battle of Lake Erie, lies on the sandy bottom, in fair preservation, and visible to the eye). The arrival of the ship builders, sailors and naval officers gave the young settlement of Erie an impetus, and this was a little later added to by the arrival of a body



CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TENTH AND SASSAFRAS STREETS.

of troops to guard the fleet then under construction. From this period the growth of the community was substantial, never approximating a "boom" in magnitude, but never seriously interrupted. From the date of the establishment of a navy yard at Erie, in 1812, the station was continuously maintained until 1825, when it was abandoned. The only United States war vessel now on the Lakes, the old iron steamer *Michigau*, has always had her headquarters at this port, as also had the revenue cutter *Perry*, until 1893, when she was transferred to the Behring Sea station to protect the seal fisheries.

Erie Harbor ranks as the finest natural harbor on the Lakes, and Presque Isle Bay, aside from its material advantage to commerce, is a very handsome body of water, and is a favorite resort of pleasure seekers, affording fine yachting and excellent fishing. The Erie Yacht Club has a very complete club house on the bay, and its members own a smart fleet of sailing and steam yachts, some of which float champion flags. Most of the boats are of latest modern construction, and include "fin-keels" and "Brownie" types. At the head of the bay is located lovely Massassanga Point, with its beautifully wooded parks, one of the most popular pleasure resorts in the State. It is yearly visited by thousands of pleasure seekers from all parts of the country. In addition to first class hotel accommodations, there is a band and orchestra to furnish music for lawn concerts and the big dancing pavilion. The attractions include boating, fishing, surf bathing, water tobogganing and various other waterside amusements. Just east of Massassanga Point is Tracy Point, occupied by the Sommerhelm Club. There is a large club house, pier, romantic glens, deep forest, and much native wildness. The dining hall has an appetizing menu for those who are lucky enough to be guests of the club. A little further east, on a wooded bluff, overlooking the bay and lake, is the Kahkwa Boat and Social Club's handsome house and grounds. In addition to these, are Eaglehurst and the Cascade Club, each occupying attractive houses with sylvan surroundings, overlooking the bay. The Grove House Park, is another public resort just east of the city, with attractive surroundings and good hotel accommodations, fine fishing, boating and bathing. Thus Erie has become essentially a pleasure-loving community.

But not to the extent that her citizens neglect business, as will be shown by the development of her business interests. The lake shipping of Erie has been important from the earliest days of the lake trade; but the palmiest period was during the active business life of the late Rufus S. Reed, who conducted the most extensive individual shipping interests on the lakes, and in addition to owning and operating a large number of sailing vessels, established a line of splendid passenger steamers that in the thirties were rated as the swiftest and best equipped boats on the lakes. They were frequently sailed out of port with a passenger list of a thousand, in addition to a valuable cargo of freight. Three of these passenger steamers entered and cleared from Erie every week, and in those days no harbor on the lakes presented more life and activity.

The year 1840 marked an epoch in the history of the port trade, when the Erie canal was opened, and the immense fields of coal in the interior of the State found a cheap outlet for the Western markets by way of Erie harbor. In the wild dreams of those times a fever of speculation developed. Erie was destined to become a great commercial mart, and improvements and projects were planned on a metropolitan scale. The most extensive dock improvements were projected and many of them carried out. Land values in the city were advanced rapidly, and there is no telling what would have been the outcome of it all, if a money panic had not at this time seized the country, and brought disaster to all those engaged in the speculation. Later, when the Erie canal was abandoned, a serious blow was dealt to the shipping interests of Erie, and its vicissitudes since that time have not been often on the side of fortune, until they were consolidated.

Erie's present day vessel interests are quite important, approximating a cash value of \$3,000,000, and embrace the boats of the Anchor Line, a fleet of eighteen steamers; the McBrier Line, of three fine steam carriers, and the Erie Dock and Transportation Company's fleet of lake and canal carriers, running between Erie and New York.

The Anchor Line handles all the grain brought to the port and all package freight carried from Erie. Their boats ply between Erie and Chicago, Milwaukee and Duluth. Three large elevators handle the grain which is shipped for the East by the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad. They also have immense freight houses covering many acres, which are used to handle and store the enormous volume of package freight and flour shipped East and West over their line.

Second in importance in harbor trade is the handling of iron ore. The Carnegie Company operates three large wharves, fitted out with Brown hoists and all the latest modern appliances for the economic handling of iron ore, which is brought down the Lakes to be shipped over the Erie and Pittsburg Railroad to the Pittsburg furnaces and manufacturers. The Pittsburg docks for the handling of iron ore are immense in their capacity, and are operated by the Erie and Pittsburg Road. They have every modern improvement for the quick dispatch of trade, and are one of the most important series of docks on the Lakes.

The coal trade at this port is represented by the W. L. Scott Company, the largest shippers on the Lakes, and the Panhandle Coal Company. The W. L. Scott Company ship about 600,000 tons of coal each season.

The lumber trade is handled by schooners and tramp steamers, and there is from 10,000,000 to 15,000,000 feet handled at the docks. Much of it is shipped South.

The Erie Dock and Transportation Company, backed by H. F. Watson, the big paper manufacturer, is in the carrying trade between Erie and New York. It is the pioneer lake and canal line, and carries freight unbroken through to the East, and brings supplies for the paper mill from the East.

Erie's lake fish industry is the most important on the Lakes, and does an immense business, shipping thousands of tons of fish every year. The catch some years exceeds 12,000,000 pounds, in which there is employed a fleet of twenty-eight steam and fourteen sail vessels, and 500 men.

The total imports for 1894 at this port of grain were 17,807,862 bushels; merchandise, 169,584,533 pounds; iron ore, 648,628 tons.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The harbor is the terminus of three railroads—the Philadelphia and Erie, the Erie and Pittsburg and Pittsburg, Shenango and Lake Erie. The Lake Shore and the Nickel Plate Roads also pass through the city.

In the development of her railroad interests Erie was so unfortunate as to incur the ill-will of one of the most powerful of these corporations, through the antagonisms arising from differences of opinion as to the proper policy to be pursued in the uniting of two of the minor corporations in which the city held an interest. In the earlier days of railroading the public mind had not yet accorded to railroad corporations the autocratic power they have since asserted in the management of their property, and when the attempt was made in 1853 to change the gauge of the line leading east from Erie to

conform to that of the road running to Cleveland, making the two roads practically one line, and Erie only a way station, instead of the important transfer point her citizens had calculated, there was war. The tracks were torn up and every obstacle, both legal or lawless, was placed in the way of the accomplishment of the purpose in view. This conflict was carried on for two years, and at the end of that time the railroad companies won, the small roads were united, and the Lake Shore through line was established. The bad blood stirred up by that conflict affected local politics and business for many years, and to this day the Lake Shore Road, although deriving a large trade from Erie, is very chary of her local

and can apparently nurse a grudge through a long series of years. As a result of her apparent coolness to Erie, the city officials are not particularly enthusiastic in granting the occasional favors the corporation asks for at the hands of the city.

The local situation in relation to all the other roads is that of mutual friendship and good feeling. But the "railroad war" in Erie is one of the local events that has still to be handled with gloves, for fear of touching a tender spot.

In the earlier years of the city's history great things were expected from the possession of such a grand natural harbor, and it was a generally accepted proposition that lake trade would necessarily come to the port without much local effort. It was only after Cleveland and Buffalo had outstripped her in lake commerce that Erie realized what was wrong with her harbor theory, and that Buffalo, nearer the Eastern market, was handling the freight that was expected to come to Pennsylvania's only lake port.

About 1860 manufacturing began to attract the attention of local business interests. It was quickly demonstrated that if our location was not just right to secure a commanding position in the lake trade, it was especially adapted for manufacturing cheaply in both metals and wood. Near to the great coal fields, with direct communication on the one hand and cheap carrying facilities from the great iron mines of the Superior region on the other, gave ideal conditions. From a modest beginning, with one or two small engine and boiler constructing plants in 1860, Erie had become in 1892 the leading engine and boiler manufacturing centre of the world, and her products had found a market in every country of the globe. There are over a dozen firms in Erie engaged in the production of engines and boilers, and many of the plants cover acres of ground. The Pennsylvania Boiler Works, of Erie, is one of the largest and best-equipped institutions of its kind in the United States. In 1850 Mr. Fred Jarecki started a very modest brass works; in 1895 he is the head of the Jarecki Manufacturing Company, who own and operate a plant for the manufacture of brass and plumbers' goods that is without a rival in size, equipment and volume of production. Two other concerns in the same line of trade have also grown from small beginnings to commanding positions.

In the manufacture of stoves and hollow ware the Erie product finds a market all over the world, and five plants, employing 700 to 1,000 men, have grown up from small beginnings in the past quarter of a century. They represent a capital of \$400,000, and have an annual product of from \$700,000 to \$1,000,000.

Erie's brewing and malting interests represent a capital of \$850,000 and an annual product of over \$1,000,000.

Two extensive piano factories employ 300 men and had an output in 1894 of \$550,000.

Erie has the only factory in the United States for the production of a chemical bleach extensively used in this country, but which was all imported prior to the establishing of these works, which are on a very extensive scale.

There is great diversity in local manufactures. They represent a total capital of \$12,000,000, and an average annual product of over \$15,000,000, and give employment to between 6,000 and 8,000 men. A peculiarity of Erie's manufactories is that there is no one concern or special products that overshadow the others in local importance.

They all developed from small beginnings and slender capital, and most of them are in this centennial year on a very secure and substantial basis, and are leading concerns of their kind.

Erie owes her superior advantages as a manufacturing centre to the remarkably low cost of living, and to the fact that all kinds of raw material meet at this point for transshipment—the iron ore and lumber of the Northwest, and the coal and coke of the Shenango Valley—and it is scientific economy to turn them into finished product at this point to save the profit-eating expense of transshipment and double handling. Strange as it may seem, although Erie is a large consumer of pig iron, not a pound is produced here. It has been demonstrated lately that pig iron can be made in Erie 35 cents a ton cheaper than in the great pig iron producing centre, the Shenango Valley. We would have had a blast furnace in

operation but for the instability of the iron market for the past three years, which rendered the investment of so large a capital a matter of considerable risk at this critical period. All indications point to Erie's becoming one of the chief industrial centres of the world in the not very distant future.

But this favored locality is not absolutely dependent upon manufacturing growth for prosperity. Possessing a large area of fertile soil and a rare climate, Erie county has not only been able to supply her large home market with the choicest products of the soil, but is an extensive shipper to the outside markets. And herein lies the local business stability and immunity from serious industrial disturbance. It is pretty generally admitted by commercial men that no community that was liable to be disastrously influenced by the depression of the past two years, showed less of its effects than the "Gem City of the Lakes."

In the matter of small fruit and grape growing, one small town in the county, North East, last year shipped 450 carloads of grapes to the outside markets, besides furnishing a large local market. The county is equally prolific in the production of all the small fruits. Erie county butter and cheese is also a prime favorite, and that more of it does not find its way to the Eastern market is because home consumers prefer it even to the famed Chautauqua county product.

For over fifty years Erie maintained a street market that almost assumed the proportions of a fair. It was held three times a week, and was the resort of most of the householders of the city, who, from long custom, had learned its value in furnishing crisp and fresh produce at a very small cost. It was equally the wonder of visiting strangers who had never seen its like. Thousands of dollars changed hands on every market day. The market was permitted to

be held on the principal business street, and the over-fastidious criticised it as unsightly and provincial. But it had as its friends even the State street merchants, who knew its value in drawing trade to the city. Public sentiment was strong in its favor, and, although the subject of its abolition was discussed by the city officials, so strong was it in popular favor that it was not seriously considered until this spring, when the City Councils, amid a storm of protest, passed an ordinance abolishing it. Trade had grown up around it, and as soon as it was abolished various localities began the



CENTRAL SCHOOL, CORNER OF ELEVENTH AND SASSAFRAS STREETS.

construction of market houses, with a view to drawing that trade. Inside of a month there were three market houses under way, and to-day Erie has four fine market houses, one of them costing \$50,000, in which market is held almost daily. The city is surrounded by fine market gardens, and the raising of market truck is a business in

which many families have made a competency, and have been able to retire, while others have accumulated capital with which to go into business.

One of the public institutions of which Erie is justly proud is the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home. It is located on the historic garrison ground, near where General Anthony Wayne was buried. Wayne's monument is a reproduction on the original site, of the block house, in which he died in 1796. In 1809 his remains were removed to his old home at Radnor, in the eastern part of the State. An incident connected with the removal of the remains that is not generally known is that the body had begun to petrify, and when Dr. Wallace exhumed it, expecting to find only the bones, which were the only part that could be moved so far, owing to the lack of transportation facilities, he was astonished to find the body in a good state of preservation, and he had to separate the flesh and reinter all but the bones. The relatives did not know until long afterwards of the condition of the body or they would not have permitted its removal, as a boiling process had to be resorted to in order to complete the work. The old grave is carefully kept, and on Decoration Day is remembered and handsomely decorated.

In the matter of public institutions Erie is especially proud of her fine hospitals, the

Hamot and St. Vincent's, both of which are managed with all the care and skill that medical science and expert nurse service are capable of. They are both undergoing material enlargement, and when the improvements are completed there will be few finer hospitals in the State.

Erie's public school system is managed with the utmost liberality in the provision of buildings and the best modern facilities. One of the impressive sights of the city is the school building architecture, which is unexcelled by any city of the size in the Union.

Erie's residence streets, with their magnificent lawns, modern residences and wealth of shade trees, give many of the thoroughfares the appearance of well-kept parks. It is a matter of general comment that to properly appreciate the magnificence of the city it is necessary to take a drive through its principal residence avenues, which are the equal of any to be found in the larger cities.

In looking over the past century of her existence Erie can feel reasonably proud of her achievements and her position, and if the next century fulfills the present promise of future development, Erie's trade and commerce will be an important factor in pushing Pennsylvania to the premier position among the States of the Union, a position

she will occupy before the first quarter of the new century has passed.

An event of great local import to the citizens of Erie was the visit of General Lafayette in the summer of 1825. His stay was made the occasion of great festivity. One of the notable features was an open-air banquet from an elevated place overlooking the lake. The canvas roof covering the site of the banquet was made from sails of the captured British vessels taken in the battle of Lake Erie.



ERIE CITY HALL.

The assembling of Perry's fleet at Erie for its first cruise, August 6, 1813, fresh from the yards, was the first time that the stars and stripes had an adequate armed protection on the lakes.

When Commodore Perry, together with the naval officers of the British fleet as prisoners of war, arrived in Erie after the fight at Put-in-Bay, Perry requested that no noisy demonstration be indulged in, out of a feeling of courtesy for his unfortunate prisoners. It is related that as much as they

respected and honored Commodore Perry, Erie's citizens could not keep their enthusiasm bottled.

Erie has a very complete and efficient paid Fire Department, embracing six steamers, six hose companies, a chemical engine, hook and ladder truck. The hose wagons are equipped with light ladders and chemical extinguishers.

The new City Hall is an up-to-date structure, and would be a credit to any city of three times Erie's population.

From,

Esquire
Philadelphia

Date,

Sept 15/95

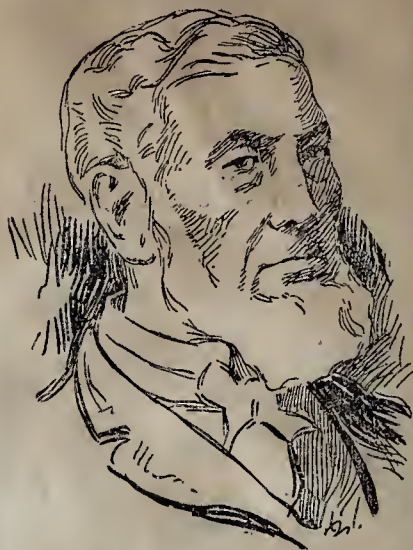
Old Waterford To Celebrate

THE ANCIENT AND HISTORIC
BOROUGH WILL HAVE ITS CEN-
TENNIAL ON TUESDAY.

Made Famous by the Presence of
Washington and Lafayette—A
Street Parade, Music, Addresses,
Sports and an Exhibition to Be
the Features of the Day.

THE borough of Waterford, in Erie
county, Pa., is little known in the
eastern end of the State. It is situa-
ted on the line of the Philadelphia
and Erie Railroad, and is distant four-
teen miles from the city of Erie. It
nestles in a strictly agricultural dis-
trict and is one of the prettiest little
towns in the county. Historically it
can claim honors unequalled by other
more important towns, and at its cen-
tennial celebration on Tuesday next

the events leading up to the primitive
settlement will be told in a program
of interesting exercises. This has been
arranged by a committee of citizens.
The celebration opens at the Park
Opera House on Monday evening with
vocal music and addresses. Hon. Wil-
liam Benson, one of the best-known
and most estimable citizens of the
borough, will give a history of Wa-
terford, which, at the beginning of the



Hon. William Benson.

seventeenth century was inhabited
by a tribe of Indians called the Eries
—a tribe famous for their skill with
the bow and arrow.

As a matter of history King James,
the First of England, granted to the
London and the Plymouth companies in
England, by letters patent in 1606, cer-



OLD BLOCK HOUSE AT FORT LE BOEUF.
(From an Oil Painting Belonging to Pierre Jansen)

tain rights and privileges to a strip of territory 600 miles wide from the mouth of Cape Fear River, in North Carolina, to Halifax, in Nova Scotia, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. France, from the first discovery of America, had not been an idle spectator. She, too, was ambitious of empire. This led to the granting by the King of France to Le Monte, a Frenchman, the sovereignty of the entire country from the fortieth to the forty-sixth degree of north latitude. The suggestion leading to a union of Canada with the Valley of the Mississippi resulted in the establishment of military posts or forts as a security against the English and their advancing settlements on the eastern slope of the Alleghenies.

One of the forts thus established was Le Boeuf, which in after years was attacked and destroyed by the Indians. It was during the existence of this military post at Le Boeuf, now Waterford, that George Washington visited the post on his first mission of service with instruction from Governor Dinwiddie, of Virginia. While the French officers were holding a



Joseph L. McKay.

conference Washington directed his men to ascertain the number of canoes ready for use while he took the dimensions of the fort. Washington's mission was to inquire from the French commander by whose authority and instructions he had invaded the King of Great Britain's territory, and asking him to make a peaceable departure. The only answer he got was that the object of his visit would be communicated to the Marquis Duquesne. There were stirring times after this and in 1760 Major Rodgers, of the English army, took possession of Presque Isle, now

Erie, and three years later a treaty of peace was signed at Paris.

Later on the English built the old "block house" at Waterford, which

NEW BLOCK OF BUILDINGS AT WATERFORD.



is here reproduced. It was opposite the site of the old French fort. This was in 1794, and its erection was superintended by Andrew Ellicott, who had located the towns of Erie, Warren and Franklin in pursuance of an act of the Legislature. He also laid out the towns of Waterford, the Legislature afterwards ratifying his course. In 1833 Waterford was incorporated as a borough. Thirty-five years later the old "block house," which in the meantime was used as a part of a hotel, was destroyed by fire. The site is unoccupied at present, and as a relic seems to have been sadly neglected. It is overgrown with trees and brush, and here and there some of the foundation stones are still exposed to view.

About the time of Waterford's incorporation the town did a thriving business. It was then the head of navigation between the Ohio River and the lake. Boats were built there and run to Pittsburg and on down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans. A regular line of keel boats was established between Waterford

and Pittsburg, and to this day a part of one of the old boats can be seen imbedded on the bank of Le Boeuf creek. There were three warehouses on the creek used for storing salt. The remnants of one still remain. Mr. Benson in his history of Waterford will tell an amusing incident in connection with the transportation by boat. It seems that the boatmen were not paid in cash. Instead they got one barrel for every eight carried.

old German had been running for the eighth barrel, and becoming dissatisfied demanded the tenth barrel in payment. "Well, all right," said the contractor, "have it so. I am agreed." But when the German began unloading, rolling out the tenth barrel for himself and setting the others aside, he exclaimed with apparently much astonishment: "By Jimminy! that's the first I knowed as eight was more as ten."

Waterford has just recovered from a fire which in March last destroyed about one-half of the business portion of the town. In place of the old frame structures the enterprising business men have reared a fine row of brick stores, a representation of which appears in this article. The town's centennial comes at an appropriate time, for with it the merchants can celebrate the completion of the new block of stores. While the town is said to be slow in some things it has displayed much activity and enterprise in rebuilding. This is highly creditable to the merchants, among whom may be mentioned Joseph. L. McKay, M. M. Davis, F. E. Ensworth,

be a street parade, in which the borough officials, the business men, firemen and school children will take part. At 2 P. M. Hon. E. A. Walling, of Erie, will deliver the centennial oration in the Public Park, and a chorus of 100 voices, under the direction of Levant Davls, will sing patriotic songs. At 3 o'clock there will be sports on the diamond and in the evening the town will illuminate. A feature of the celebration will be the historical exhibition in the Academy Building. This will include relics rare and valuable, such as the bed upon which Marquis De LaFayette slept while in Waterford, a silver drinking cup used by George Washington during his travels, the first piano in Waterford, a copy of the original charter of the borough, ancient documents, and old-fashioned kitchen reproduced, complete in all details, with the original utensils as used nearly a hundred years ago.

The day's events will no doubt be long remembered as the most interesting in the history of the village.

J. R.



SITE OF THE OLD BLOCK HOUSE.

T. Whitney and others. Judge William Benson was prompt in rebuilding his banking house, and he can now lay claim to having one of the finest banks of any of the small towns in Northwestern Pennsylvania. Two of the oldest citizens who have been contributing much to Waterford's progress are Pierpont Judson and J. L. Cook. Both were early settlers, the former having conducted the hotel for which the old fort was a part. Another Waterfordian, full of vim and business tact, is Edgar P. Benson, who is associated with his father in the banking business and is part owner in the Central Roller Mills.

The big day of the celebration is Tuesday. In the morning there will

Peninsula Title.

There is considerable conflicting opinion as to wherein the title to the peninsula lies. This has been brought about by recent discussion of the matter and possibly one of the most clear expositions of the case so far published appears in the "Rambler's Etchngs" in the Dispatch this morning, by Judge Galbraith.

From what the judge says the title is equally vested in the state of Pennsylvania and the United States. A careful search of the records has been made by

Capt. John Fleeharty, who furnishes to the Dispatch all the notes covering the period from earliest times. These notes and references and copies made by Capt. Fleeharty are most exhaustive and cover all laws up to the present time, all deeds and references to the peninsula. By the act of February 4th, 1869, a part of "Erie" purchase was conveyed to the Marine Hospital Association as Judge Galbraith says. The deed is recorded in deed book 34, page 435, Erie county records and date of record October 21, 1869. Then in accordance with the act of 1871 the Garrison Grounds, outlet No. 555, and tract No. 2, 50 acres in third section of Erie is granted to the state of Pennsylvania for "one dollar." See patent book H, vol. 61, page 476. In accordance also with this act of assembly of May 11, 1871, a deed was made to the United States of the peninsula property and is recorded in Erie in deed book 40, pages 634 to 637 and dated August 18, 1871, the deed being drawn July 17, 1871, in accordance with the act, conveying all title the Marine Hospital had to the peninsula to the United States. The principal clause of present interest reads:

"Containing 2,024 acres as near as may be being same piece of land granted to said Marine Hospital by patent dated October 18, A. D., 1869, * * * to be held by the United States as near as may be in its present condition and only for the purposes of national defence and for the protection of the harbor of Erie, * * * to the only proper use and behoof of said United States of America.

While the act states that in all other respects, to be subject to the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the state of Pennsylvania; and the consent of the state of Pennsylvania is hereby given to such transfer of title only for the purposes and under the limitations herein before mentioned.

The deed does not have this clause. Judge Galbraith cites the statutes of 1871, and that possession was taken by the United States government previous to 1886. However, if this is so, and the statutes so state, why was it necessary to have an act passed in 1886 accepting it. Such an act was passed as a rider to an appropriation bill, August 5, 1886. (See Cong. Record, 49th Congress, 1st ses. page 3790.) It was introduced and advocated by Hon. Wm. L. Scott and was for the

"Improving harbor of Erie, continuing the improvement and also for the improvement of said harbor, as recom-

mended by the chief engineer, January 13, 1885.

"Provided that the secretary of war be and he is hereby authorized and directed to receive and accept for the United States from the Marine Hospital of Erie, Pa., the title to the Peninsula of Presque Isle at Erie, Pa., as tendored by said Marine Hospital, agreeably to the provisions of an act of the legislature of Pennsylvania approved May 11th, 1871, and provided further that \$22,500 of said sum shall not be expended until the aforesaid title shall be accepted by the secretary of war."

This act passed. In a letter from George Radway, chief clerk of the interior department, to Hon. W. C. Culbertson in 1889, he goes into some detail and speaks of the "acceptance of the deed" of 1871, under an opinion by the judge advocate general, given on Nov. 18, 1883, whereby the United States might so accept "by entering upon and taking possession of the land in behalf of the United States," which the secretary of war afterwards did.

In those days there was much talk about this deed of the peninsula to M. B. Lowry who was the president of the Marine Hospital, and others. It was made pretty warm for the then senator from Erie county, and the upshot was this final transfer. The Dispatch takes pleasure in giving these facts and submits them without caring to express an opinion. There are those who hold that the act of 1886 with the acceptance of "title" mentioned, and the further fact that the deed of 1871 does not mention the state as a partner with the United States, gives the government clear title. Other attorneys, and among them another able ex-judge holds with Judge Galbraith. Altogether it is a most interesting question.

RAMBLER'S ETCHINGS.

The query as to the title to the Peninsula, propounded in the Etchings a couple of days ago, has elicited clear, instructive and complete information relative to it, at the expense of considerable research by Hon. Wm. A. Galbraith, and the Rambler is giving sound advice to Erie citizens who wish to know "where we are at" on the absorbing subject, by telling them to cut it out for future reference. It is as follows:

* * * *

"Erie, Pa., Nov. 19, 1895.

Sam. Woods, Esq., ('Rambler'):

Answering your question as to the ownership of the peninsula of Presque Isle, I find, on a careful examination of

Various acts of Assembly and other records, that while the right of occupancy and control is vested in the government of the United States, the title and actual ownership remains in the state of Pennsylvania.

On February 4, 1869, the Legislature of Pennsylvania passed an act 'supplementary to the act incorporating the Marine Hospital at Erie,' which, after a preamble reciting that 'the councils of the city of Erie have so neglected the management and supervision of the peninsula, which forms the northern boundary of the harbor of Erie as to prevent any adequate revenue arising therefrom, therefore, be it enacted etc., That section 14 of the act of April 2, 1868, entitled 'A further supplement to an act to incorporate the city of Erie,' be so amended as to place the supervision and control of the said peninsula in the power of the Board of Directors of the Marine Hospital of Pennsylvania, * * * and the said Board of Directors are hereby empowered to exercise such supervision, disposition and control of the same by leasing, or otherwise, as to them shall be deemed for the best interest of said hospital.'

In 1871, by the act of Assembly, passed May 11, of that year, an appropriation of \$30,000 was made to the Marine Hospital at Erie, but only on the condition that that corporation should reconvey to the state all the lands granted by their act of incorporation in 1867, and on the further condition that said Marine Hospital 'shall convey to the United States of America all title it may have to the peninsula of Presque Isle * * * to be held by said United States, as near as may be, in its present condition and only for the purposes of national defense, and for the protection of the harbor of Erie, but in all other respects, to be subject to the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the state of Pennsylvania; and the consent of the state of Pennsylvania is hereby given to such transfer of title only for the purposes and under the limitations herein before mentioned.'

An act of Congress was passed in the same year, 1871, (U. S. Statutes, vol. 24, page 312) by which the Secretary of War was directed to receive and accept title under the act of May 11, 1871, just recited, and on May 25, 1871, a deed was duly executed by the Marine Hospital officers and directors and accepted by the Secretary of War and possession was taken, by the United States government, which has ever since had the custody and control of the same, although the actual title and ownership still remains vested in the State of Pennsylvania.

This condition need not hinder, however, the use of a portion of the peninsula on the bay front for manufacturing purposes, as it will no doubt be easy to secure such concurrent legislation by Congress and the state legislature as may be necessary, in case public opinion should favor the same, as it no doubt will, should

there be a strong demand for this particular location by those seeking eligible sites for the manufacture of iron, as now appears very probable.

The popular error and confusion of ideas as to the ownership of the peninsula of Presque Isle has no doubt arisen from the official letter from the chief clerk of the Interior Department published in Miss Sanford's History of Erie County, where he speaks of the 'title' to said peninsula being tendered to the United States; and in another place he refers to the deed conveying title being accepted, etc.

In fact, the United States government did not acquire any title but only, as you see by referring to the language of the acts, the right of possession and occupancy and that for a distinctly limited purpose, namely, 'national defense and for the protection of the harbor of Erie,' and in all other respects to be subject to the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the state of Pennsylvania.'

Truly yours,

WM. A. GALBRAITH."

* * * *

Erie is the geographical center of the iron trade and this generation will see whalebacks and deep draught barges unloading ore at the northwest angle of Big Bend, on the south shore of the peninsula, with clear water between that and the mouth of the harbor, of not less than twenty-two feet in depth at its shallowest point.

From, *Herald*
Erie Pa
Date, *July 13 96*

OLD LANDMARK

Another of Erie's Historic
Buildings Torn Down.
German Catholics.

The erection of the elegant new residence of Mr. L. E. Foote, on West Eighth street, has displayed an historic building. It became such because associated with some of the earlier re-

ligious and military history of Erie. The modest cottage lately No. 244 West Eighth street, which has disappeared—formerly stood on the south side of Eighth, near Sassafras street. It was then owned and occupied by Capt. Wolfgang Erhart, whose family migrating from Alsace-Lorraine to Erie, in 1830, was the first German Catholic family to reside in this city. They thus headed a long procession. Their abode was first at the northeast corner of State and Tenth streets. Then at the northwest corner of French and Fourth; and afterwards for years on West Eighth, in the cottage just removed. In the first of these locations the German Catholics of Erie held services according to the rites of their ancestral faith in 1833, when Father Mosquette officiated. In 1834, the same father was accompanied by Rt. Rev. Bishop Kenrick, who then confirmed—perhaps the first Roman Catholic confirmation in Erie. For some years preceding the erection of the small frame St. Mary's Church, on East Ninth (dedicated Aug. 2, 1840), the Erhart home was practically the German Catholic center where services were occasionally held with such grouping of those of kindred faith and such observance of forms as circumstances permitted. In 1840-41 and '42, the large and handsomely uniformed Company of Washington Guards (with its fine brass band, headed by Anthony Knoll), commanded by Capt. Erhart, had their place of rendezvous at the same spot. Their drill room was the eastern rooms (thrown together), of the Erhart brick house, west of this cottage, now known as the Spooner homestead, and lately occupied by Mayor Walter Scott. For these company musters the German manuscript notices as written and posted, every word in German, are well remembered. Numbers of old residents still cherish with unaffected regard the memory of Capt. Erhart, whose activity in promoting the religious interests of his countrymen and arousing a military enthusiasm were so pronounced. The cottage was purchased by Mr. Stewart, grandfather of Mrs. Foot. In glancing at the dozen or so of Roman Catholic congregations of Erie (some of them numbering thousands of adherents) it is hard to realize that in the early thirties, about all of that faith in Erie, particularly of the German race, could be grouped in one small room of the little cottage just removed. While their friends will commend the taste and enterprise of Mr. and Mrs. Foot in the construction of their beautiful home, yet incidents like these and the rapid disappearance of old land marks, identified with local history, often emphasize the de-

mand for an historical society, which would rescue the traditions and embalms the flickering memories which, while they linger, help to make up the unique and remarkable history of the Gem City. It is a history in the making of which, parts were enacted in its stern drama by two of the leading powers of Europe. In its adjustment the conflicting claims of sovereign states were put forth and maintained, while all were ultimately harmonized by the intervention of the Federal authority when under the attestation of George Washington the site of this beautiful city became an integral and inalienable part of the land, honored in bearing the name of one of the country's greatest benefactors, the matchless William Penn.

From, *Dispatch*
Erie Pa
 Date, *Jan. 10th '98*

EARLY ERIE.

History of Indian Occupation of
 This Section.

WARRING TRIBES

And Washington's Mission to
 Fort Le Boeuf.

The paper read by the historian, Mrs. W. N. Johnson, at the meeting of the "Daughters of the Revolution," at the anniversary gathering one evening this week had such special value for its local history that it is printed as a means of preserving and disseminating the information it contains. Mrs. Johnson in opening her paper said:

"We, who are to-day, enjoying all the privileges of advanced civilization,

with our railroads stretching from ocean to ocean, across the wide continent; our steamships ploughing the waves of oceans, seas and rivers; our telegraphs, and cables connecting us with European countries; our electric lights, and long distance telephones, can scarcely realize that two hundred years ago, all this vast continent, except a small portion along the Atlantic coast, was inhabited by savages.

"It is with the 'noble red man' that I shall begin my paper on the early history of Erie. There were three tribes who inhabited the south shore of Lake Erie. The Kakhwas, the Misissaugas, and the Eries. Many historians have assumed that the Kakhwas and Eries were identical, but more thorough research has proven the contrary. The Kakhwas (otherwise known as the 'Neutral Nation') lived along the Niagara river, around the site of Buffalo, but principally upon its western banks. This tribe was destroyed by the Iroquois as early as 1651.

"The Misissaugas, better known as the Ojibways, according to Marshall, who is considered the greatest authority on Niagara frontier history, lived along the northern portion of the west shore of the Niagara river, along Chippewas creek. Mississauga Point is opposite Fort Niagara, on the Canadian side. They were called Chippewas also. The bands of the Eries extended from south of the most western extremity of Lake Erie, as far eastward as the Genesee river. On the whole, I have learned that the most probable Indian occupation of Presque Isle was that of the Eries, though these tribes constantly shifted about, destroying each other, and seizing the bands of the vanquished foes. French missionaries were among the Eries as early as 1626. One historian says this tribe numbered about 12,000. They were destroyed by the Iroquois in 1655. A pathetic story is that of the extermination of the Eries. Learning that the Iroquois were about to move against them, they determined to surprise the enemy in their own country, counting upon an easy victory. Their plans however were betrayed by a treacherous woman of their own tribe and defeat was their portion. Upon receiving this information, the Iroquois organized a powerful war party, and on the bank of a stream, prepared an ambush for their unsuspecting foes. On came the Eries with no thought of danger. The stream was reached and crossed. Then, as if springing up out of the very earth, the Iroquois fell upon them, and they were driven back with fearful loss. Nothing daunted, they crossed again to renew the attack and were again driven back. Seven times in all did they cross this fateful stream, always with the same result, and at last, realizing the bitter humiliation of their defeat, the remnant of

the mighty war party which had set out so proudly a few hours before mournfully retraced its steps to its own village and the waiting women and children.

Eries Growing Weaker.

"Later, battle after battle was fought. The Eries were growing weaker and fewer. Not alone did the war club and arrow seal their doom. A pestilence broke out among them and they fell like leaves before an autumn gale. The Iroquois, quick to seize this advantage, determined to end one of the cruellest and most bloody wars ever waged. They remorselessly butchered the captive warriors, and distributed the women and children among their own lodges. The few Eries who succeeded in making their escape fled to the south and west, their name and language as a tribe lost. Students of Indian history maintain that in progress and intelligence, the Eries were far above the other tribes of North American Indians. They have long since passed away.

"But their name is on the waters.

"And ye may not wash it out.

"Such is a brief sketch of the people from whom Lake Erie took her name.

"After the extermination of the Eries, all the south shore of the lake was occupied by the Iroquois, or 'Six Nations' as they were afterward called by the English: a confederacy composed of the Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas, Oneidas, Mohawks and Tuscaroras. There for an hundred years their campfires shown brightly. They pursued their game through the trackless forests, and cultivated their patches of corn. Their villages dotted the shores of the lake and their canoes shot over its bright waters, but a change was soon to come with advancing civilization. Both French and English were preparing to extend their settlements westward, each laying claim to the fertile lands west of the Allegheny mountains, a claim not to be settled without many a hard fought battle during a period of years.

"Each of these contending parties saw the necessity of gaining the good will and assistance of the Indians inhabiting this region.

"Through the agency of one, Joucaire, many of the tribes were won over to the French. He had been taken prisoner by the Iroquois when a child and became thoroughly conversant with their language and customs, and was really considered by them as one of themselves. When he at last returned to civilization the Canadian government was not slow to recognize what a powerful factor he might prove in their hands for the management of the Indians, owing to his intimate knowledge of their character and customs. At times Joucaire was sent as ambassador

to the Indians; as a mediator between warring tribes; even as a leader of the Indians when employed by the French.

"In 1749, the Celeron expedition was sent out from Quebec to lay claim to the lands west of the Alleghenies in the name of the French king. They had with them lead plates with inscriptions upon them declaring that the land belonged to France, some of which were nailed on trees, while others were buried in the ground. It was not until four years later however, that the French took active measures to make good their claim to these lands. In the spring of 1753, it was decided by the Canadian government to establish forts along the line which Celeron had taken from the lakes to the Ohio river, and an expedition under the command of three young French officers was sent out for this purpose. When they reached Chautauqua, the first point settled upon, they were not satisfied with the location and resolved to explore further. They marched along the shore of the lake until Presque Isle was reached. The beautiful peninsula jutting out into the lake surrounding a bay whose advantages were so manifest, at once decided them to establish the fort at this place. Du Quesne, the commander of Montreal, was extravagant in his praises of

Presque Isle Bay,

calling it 'the finest spot in nature.'

"The fort and a road running south to Fort LeBoeuf was completed in August, 1753. The fort was situated on a bluff, about an hundred yards from the lake, near the mouth of Mill-creek. It was one hundred and twenty feet long, two stories high, with a log house in each corner and gates at the north and south sides built of chestnut logs. It is not so many years since, that the remains of this fortification were plainly visible. The English seeing fort after fort erected, became indignant at the aggressions of the French upon the territory of His Britanio Majesty. A commissioner was sent to expostulate with the French commander on the Ohio, but his mission was a failure. Governor Dinwiddie, who claimed the country as a portion of Virginia, then decided to send a demand that the fortifications of Presque Isle and LeBoeuf be discontinued.

"Casting about him for a suitable ambassador, for this mission, his choice fell upon George Washington, who, although only twenty-one years of age, had gained the confidence of the public by the courage, ability and judgement he had heretofore shown. Washington started on this mission the 30th of November, 1753. In addition to his usual party, he was accompanied by an old Thenoah sachem, and another chief called White Thunder, also, an

Indian hunter. The weather was most inclement and Washington and his small party suffered many hardships. His instructions were to communicate with the friendly Indians at Frogstown and request an escort to the French fort. His party being thus augmented they proceeded on their way. When Washington reached the French fort, Venango, he was told by its commander, Joucaire ('now grown gray in the service of the French') that he had no authority for receiving letters, and they must go to his superior at LeBoeuf. Joucaire discovered that Washington had the Indians in his party and every effort and strategem was used to seduce them from their allegiance to the English. After being detained upon one pretext or another, for two days longer. Washington finally succeeded in extricating the chiefs from their clutches, and at noon, the 7th of December, started for Fort LeBoeuf. After four days of traveling through rain and snow, the party reached the fort. LeBoeuf was built on the same model as Presque Isle fort, but was much smaller.

Washington's Reception.

Washington was received courteously, and conducted into the presence of the commandant. After several days of irritating delay, and renewed but unsuccessful efforts to win over the Indians, Washington was at last given a letter to Gov. Dinwiddie and permitted to depart. Fiske, in his American Revolution, has this to say of Washington's mission to Venango: 'Nothing in Washington's whole career is more remarkable than the fact that when a mere boy of twenty-one he should have been selected by the governor of Virginia to take charge of that most delicate and dangerous diplomatic mission to the Indian chiefs and the French commander at Venango. Consummate knowledge of human nature as well as of wood craft,

a courage that no threats could daunt, and a clear intelligence that no treachery could hoodwink, were the qualities absolutely demanded by such an undertaking; yet the young man acquitted himself of his perilous task not merely with credit, ut with splendor.' The above sketch cannot be strictly included in the history of Presque Isle, but as it relates to Erie county, I have given it as it cannot fail to interest.

"There is said to have been a French village of about one hundred families at Pasque Isle in 1753, but it was soon abandoned. It is not my aim to give a history of the French war, so I will confine myself to Presque Isle. In 1758 the garrison of Presque Isle was reduced to two officers, thirty two soldiers and a few Indian, and in 1759, it was

ated by the French. The war closed in 1760, leaving the whole western country under the dominion of the victorious English and that year they occupied Presque Isle fort and continued to garrison it until 1763 when it was captured by the Indians with thirteen other forts. In May of that year occurred the great uprising of the Indian tribes commonly known as the 'Pontiac war.' The Delawares, Shawnees and other tribes of the Ohio, who had made the greatest pretense of friendliness for the English, and whose chiefs had been allies of Washington, were foremost in this outbreak, under the leadership of the famous chief, Pontiac. The plot was laid with most consummate skill and Indian secrecy till the forts from Detroit to Fort Du Quesne were attacked at a concerted time, and their inmates put to torture and death. Hamlets and farm houses were burned and their inhabitants remorselessly butchered. The frontiers were laid waste and desolation and terror reigned throughout the land.

Held Out Two Long Days.

"Presque Isle, with its little garrison, held out two long days. LeBoeuf had fallen but they knew it not, and when it was attacked by a large force of Indians, they resolved to hold out as long as possible in the hope that assistance would be sent them. Too well they knew the horrors that befell those who surrendered themselves to this relentless foe. The Indians threw up breastworks and the attack began. Gloomy indeed, was the outlook. Twenty men with scanty supplies of everything, shut up in a tiny castle of logs, fighting against 200, well provisioned and protected by natural earthworks, not forty yards distant. The upper story of the block house was several feet wider than the lower, and holes in the floor were provided through which they could shoot down upon the enemy. Now and again an Indian would dash across the open with a blazing fire brand in his hand, in an attempt to fire the walls of the block house, but each in turn was laid low by the unerring aim of one of the garrison. That plan was soon abandoned. Then they resorted to the fire bow. The fire bow was a stout bar of ash or hickory, one end of which was firmly set in the earth. In the other a shallow cavity was hollowed and just beneath was attached a stout thong, by which the bow could be drawn back. A ball of tow or other inflammable material wound about a small stone to give it weight was saturated with pitch. The upper end of the bow was drawn back, a fire ball placed in the cavity and lighted, the thong released and the blazing missile projected with the force and accuracy of an arrow." Again and again, the walls took fire but each blaze was extinguished as

soon as discovered. Finding this mode of no avail, the Indians then began to shoot blazing arrows into the air, which fell upon the dry shingles of the roof. Scarcely a minute passed that a tiny blaze did not shoot up. The roof could be gained from the interior through an opening protected on two sides by a barricade of planks, and from there water could be thrown on the roof. Barrels filled with water, were always kept in the block house for this emergency. All day long the Indians kept up a ceaseless firing upon the fort. Night was approaching and desperate was the plight of the little garrison. They had fought from earliest dawn without a moment's rest. They were weary and tortured by thirst. The wounded moaned piteously for water, but the supply in the barrels was exhausted and certain death awaited him who should attempt to reach the well in the parade ground. Christie knew that without water all hope of resistance must quickly disappear and ordering two men to follow him they repaired to the lower story and quickly had the floor torn up and were at work digging a well inside the block house. They worked with a will and never was a well more speedily sunk. At midnight their efforts were rewarded by two feet of muddy water, which the weary men quaffed as if it were nectar. Before the well was half completed another cry of fire was raised. They were without water but their hands were left and with them they tore off the blazing shingles and the danger was for a time averted. All through the night the Indians kept up the attack. Morning dawned bringing fresh danger, with its light. The commander's house was a mass of glowing embers, and they could see that the enemy were making preparations to undermine the blockhouse, and for that they had no defense. Still they kept up their stubborn resistance hoping against hope for relief. The day dragged its weary length along and once more darkness brooded over Presque Isle. Christie's men would have long since given up in despair, but the young commander's indomitable will and noble courage put new heart into them.

Ordered to Surrender.

"At midnight the incessant firing of the enemy suddenly ceased and a voice hailed them from its ranks, demanding their instant surrender, also declaring they were prepared to burn them from above and below and that their lives should be spared if they gave themselves up. Christie, still clinging to the hope that help would come, asked them to wait until morning and they agreed. Despairingly, the little garrison watched the light creep into the sky that morning of the

23d of June, for no help had come, no shadow of hope was left them. For some time after they had surrendered, they were kept as prisoners in the neighborhood, and then taken to Detroit, where not long after most of them succeeded in making their escape and were given refuge in the fort at that place. It has been said that 'if courage could have saved Presque Isle it would never have fallen.' Bancroft, however, in his history of the United States says that with its garrison of twenty-four men, it was one of the most defensible of the forts and might have been retained had not Christie 'out of his senses with terror' capitulated, giving up the sole chance of saving his men from the scalping knife.' He too, concedes the escape of Christie and 'a few others who were carried in triumph to Detroit.' Still another account says that by stratagem, the Indians gained an entrance to the fort. Christie was enticed to some little distance to look at some furs they had to dispose of. About the time he should have returned a large party of Indians appeared laden with peltries. Supposing Christie had sent them they were admitted to the fort. A most fearful scene of slaughter and hideous torture ensued. Only two escaped this terrible fate and one of those a woman, the wife of a scilder.

First American Settlement.

"The first American settlement of Presque Isle was begun in 1795, when a portion of Gen. Wayne's army under the command of Capt. Bissell, arrived and erected two block houses. The following year a saw mill was built, and from that time on settlers began to arrive. The winter of 1796, when Gen. Wayne was on his way home from Detroit, where he had just completed a treaty of peace with the Indians, he was taken ill. They landed at Presque Isle and he was taken to one of the block houses, where a room was prepared for him in the upper story. Before a physician could arrive from Pittsburg, the nearest point, the brave life had gone out. There, in that little room, surrounded by kind hearts but far from kindred and friends, Anthony Wayne, the hero of Stony Point, and many another hard fought battle, yielded to that conqueror, who vanquishes even the bravest soldier, and each of us in turn. A plain coffin was constructed, his name, age, and the date of his death was marked on it with brass headed tacks. Clothed in full uniform he was placed therein and buried at the foot of the flagstaff of the block house according to his expressed desire. For thirteen years he rested there, then, his family desiring to lay his remains at the side of his wife, his son came and removed them. The coffin was again interred in the grave from

which it was taken. Almost a hundred years after the death of this brave general, interest was awakened and a search made for his grave, which was finally located. In 1880, a block house, the fac simile of the one in which he had died, was built over the spot as a monument to one of the most fearless and brilliant generals the world has known.

War Again Declared.

"When 'patience had ceased to be a virtue,' on the 19th of June, 1812, the United States again declared war against Great Britain. Indignities and insults innumerable had been heaped upon us by England. Nine hundred and seventeen of our ships had been seized and our sailors impressed into the English service. France, too, began to seize our ships and the merchant service of the United States was well nigh ruined. Something must be done, yet how could we go to war with England, who had a thousand vessels in her navy, while we had only twenty? The situation was discussed in Congress. Henry Clay said, 'Weak as we are, we can fight both France and England if necessary in a good cause—the cause of honor and independence,' and many agreed with him. Others there were having a grateful remembrance of the service France had rendered us during the Revolution, were for fighting England alone. Some were opposed to going to war at all, fearing that all might be lost, which had been gained in the seven years' struggle for independence. The spirit of 1775 had not died out, and the wrongs suffered then, still rankled in the breasts of many, so war with England was declared.

A Disastrous Year.

"The first year ended in disaster to the Americans, and left the lakes and country to the northwest under the control of the British. Presque Isle (whose name at the laying out of the town had been changed to Erie) on account of its central position on the lake, and the excellence of its harbor, was considered one of the most important of the western military posts. Erie, however, was in no condition for defense. There were no fortifications. The block houses built in 1795 were nearly in ruins, and with the exception of a company of militia, there was no force at hand to withstand an invasion. Promptly at the outbreak of the war this company offered their services to the President. After serving elsewhere a short time, they were stationed at Erie. The Americans by this time realized that if they were to be successful in this second war with England, they must regain control of the lakes, and to accomplish this, they must have war vessels. The construc-

tion of a fleet was ordered, and Erie was selected as the place of greatest security for such an undertaking. The bar at the mouth of the bay precluded the possibility of the entrance of the large British war vessels, while little difficulty would be experienced in getting the contemplated fleet out of the harbor. Lieut. Oliver Hazard Perry, who had been in charge of the flotilla at Newport, was assigned the command on Lake Erie. He was a young man only twenty-seven years of age, but was well fitted for such a responsible position. He arrived in Erie the 27th of March, 1813, and seeing the defenseless condition of the place, immediately set about its fortification. The old block houses were restored, and a new block house was built on the bluff overlooking the shipyard. Redoubts were thrown up and every precaution for the safety of the fleet taken. In answer to Perry's appeal for troops, a thousand militia were ordered to Erie. Brass field pieces were placed where they could do the most execution, and soldiers were kept continuously patrolling the lake shore. That the enemy might be led to believe that a large force was concentrated at this point. The gunboats Porcupine, Tigress and Scorpion were built at the mouth of Lee's Run, while Lawrence, Niagara and Ariel were built at the mouth of the Big Cascade—the present site of the Erie & Pittsburgh docks. The delay in manning and equipping the war vessels had been most exasperating, and much difficulty was experienced in getting the Lawrence and Niagara over the bar at the mouth of the harbor, but it was finally accomplished and on the 6th of August Perry's squadron started on its first cruise. The Lawrence had been named for that brave commander who lost his life in the engagement between the Chesapeake and the Shannon, and whose last words,

"Don't Give Up the Ship,"

Perry had inscribed on his battle flag. A few weeks later this squadron gained a glorious victory in an engagement on Lake Erie, which will be known through all the ages as Perry's victory. Well deserved was the name and fame the young commodore gained that September day, and the words of his famous dispatch to Gen. Harrison, "We have met the enemy and they are ours," can never fail to thrill the heart of every true American.

"Upon Perry's return to Erie he was greeted with the wildest rejoicings, cannon boomed, processions were formed and everything done to show honor to this young hero. It was the first time an American fleet had met a British fleet and captured it and the whole country showered praise and honors upon Perry.

"A naval station was kept up at Erie until 1825. It will not do to close

this sketch of Erie without some reference to the visit of Lafayette, who, with his son, was, in 1824, making a tour of the country, whose cause he had so nobly espoused during the Revolution. At Waterford, where they had stayed over night, they were met by a delegation from Erie, which escorted them to that place. At Federal Hill a body of military was found awaiting them and the entire cortege wended their way to the foot of State street where they were greeted by a national salute, and received introductions to the naval officers and prominent citizens. Great preparations had the little town made for their entertainment. After having been presented to the ladies, they all repaired to the bridge over the ravine on Second street, between State and French, on which tables 170 feet long had been erected for a public dinner. 'The tables were elegantly adorned, and were covered with awnings made of the sails of the British vessels which Perry had captured.' The afternoon of the same day Lafayette departed for the east accompanied by numerous citizens, who evidently believed in the old adage, 'Speed the parting guest.' Louis Phillipe, who afterward became King of France, spent a day or two at Presque Isle in 1795, being entertained by Thomas Reese in his tent on the lake shore."







